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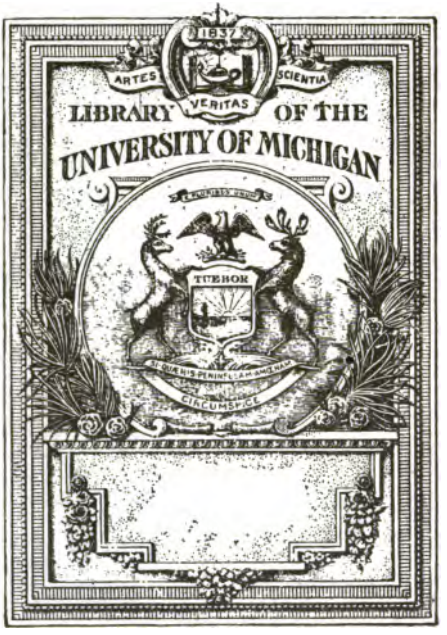
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"With eyes intent the eternal orbs to view,
Stood Beatrice, and I on her fix'd mine."

Paradiso Canto 1. 64. 65.

Dante Alighieri, 1265-1321

THE TRILOGY;

OR

DANTE'S THREE VISIONS.

38694

PART III.

PARADISO,

OR

THE VISION OF PARADISE:

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE,

IN THE METRE AND TRIPLE RHYME OF THE ORIGINAL;

WITH

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY

THE REV. JOHN WESLEY THOMAS.

DANTE ALIGHIERI, AFTER THE FRESCO OF GIOTTO.

LONDON:
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
1866.

"O isplendor di Dio, per cu' io vidi
L' alto trionfo del regno verace,
Dammi virtude a dir com' io lo vidi."

PARADISO, XXX. 97—99.

PRINTED BY J. E. ADLARD, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE.

TO THE MEMORY

OF

DEPARTED FRIENDS AND RELATIVES,

BELOVED AND UNFORGOTTEN;—

THE PROSPECT OF A REUNION WITH WHOM

RENDERS YET MORE ATTRACTIVE

THAT WORLD OF PURITY, LIGHT, AND FELICITY,

WHICH THE GENIUS OF DANTE HAS PORTRAYED,—

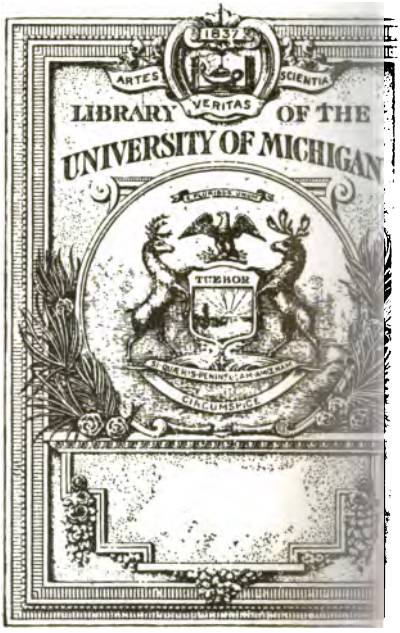
THIS VERSION OF HIS

PARADISO

IS, WITH CHEERFUL HOPE AND ENTIRE AFFECTION,

HUMBLY INSCRIBED BY

THE TRANSLATOR.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PREFACE.

...sing coincidence this translation of the ... has reached its completion during the ... has witnessed in Florence the Festival ...our of its Author, on the six-hundredth ... of his birthday. Another coincidence, ...t seems too striking to be real, is, that ...tion for the Dante Festival caused the ... his bones! On each of the events in ...y a few words may not be deemed super- ... preface to our version of *Paradiso*.

...inal monument, erected for the reception ... remains, by his friend and patron, Guido ... had gone to decay :—

...quidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulcri."

JUVENAL, *Sat.* x. 146.

... it was repaired and beautified by Ber- ...mbo, Podesta of Ravenna for the Republic ... and father of Cardinal Bembo. After ... of Dante had slept in this receptacle three ... and a half, they narrowly escaped a treat- ...dar to that which th...

For...

...rder...

...al...

has only been recently explained. The Archbishop, less bigoted than the Cardinal, and a sincere admirer of the poet, caused the remains of Dante to be secretly removed from their tomb and concealed in another part of the church. When the Archbishop died they were not restored to their original situation, and in a few years the place of their concealment was forgotten.

In the year 1692 Dante's monument was renewed at the public expense, and in 1780 was replaced by the present structure, at the expense of Cardinal Gonzaga of Mantua, the legate of that period. This mausoleum, and the sarcophagus of Greek marble bearing the poet's portrait, and supposed to contain his ashes, have been visited by thousands, including some of the greatest modern poets. Alfieri prostrated himself there, and expressed his feelings in one of the finest sonnets in the Italian language. Byron deposited a copy of his works on the tomb, and wrote—

> "I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid:
> A little cupola, more neat than solemn,
> Protects his dust."

They were mistaken. The monument was empty. On the occasion of the recent festival the town-council ordered some improvements to be made in the poet's gravestone. This rendered some digging necessary, and in breaking down the wall of a building called Braccio-forte, a wooden box was discovered, which in falling broke, and the bones fell out. Outside the box was an inscription:—

"Dantis ossa a me Fra Antonio Santi hic posita, anno 1677." Inside was written—"Dantis ossa de nuper revisa 3 Junii, 1677." The bones are well preserved, and apparently have never been underground.—See *Athenæum*.

Why do we feel so much interest in the remains of the illustrious dead, as if they were our own? It is explained by the oneness of the human family, and by our common relation to the past and the future. We believe in the brotherhood of man, in the soul and its immortality, and in a final resurrection. While the soul of Dante tenanted its clay, full of faith in the divine testimony contained in Holy Scripture, he not only realised the existence of the disembodied, but also hymned that final change—the παλιγγενεσία—therein assured to the faithful. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." —See *Paradiso* xiv. 1—66.

On the 14th of May last, Florence, after a remorse of more than five centuries for her treatment of Dante, beheld all Italy assembled to witness her deep repentance, and to inaugurate in front of her holiest place the marble effigy of her Illustrious Exile, sculptured by a son of Ravenna,[1] the city where his ashes were deposited, and where they still sleep. This festival, on the six-hundredth birthday of the Florentine Poet, has taken place just after

[1] Enrico Pazzi. The statue, twenty feet high stands on a pedestal in the style of the fourteenth century, designed by Luigi del Sarto, with the inscription, "To Dante Alighieri, Italy, MDCCCLXV"

the elevation of his birthplace to the dignity of a royal city, the metropolis of Italy, and followed close upon the establishment of Italian unity, which was an object of Dante's devout aspiration, and to the accomplishment of which his works have so powerfully contributed. It was the gathering of all Italy round her constitutional king, to do honour to her greatest poet, whose name is one of her chief glories, and who has done so much to form her language and literature, to develop her national spirit, and to aid in advancing her to the position of independence which she now occupies. Even Venice and Rome, not yet politically one with the kingdom of Italy, though united with her in spirit and hope, were present by their several representatives, alike in the splendid procession moving from the square of Santo Spirito, and in the multitudinous and enthusiastic assemblage and impressive ceremonies in the Piazza di Santa Croce. On the evening of the same day the City of Flowers was brilliantly illuminated. The winding Arno reflected myriads of lamps; the bridges that cross it and the streets on either side might be traced in long lines of light, amidst which rose conspicuous the Duomo, the Campanile, and the Church of Santa Croce, and, far away among the cypresses on the hill, old San Miniato shone out resplendent against the evening sky; while in the heart of the city the Bargello seemed on fire, and, soaring above all, the grand tower of the Palazzo Vecchio shone brightly—like the rekindled Pharos of Liberty! May the auspicious omen be realised! May the happy gathering in Florence, a sym-

bol of the unity and freedom to which Italy has at length attained, prove a means of strengthening that unity, without which her freedom cannot long be maintained, and a truthful augury of that complete emancipation of all her children from the Austrian yoke and the Papal tyranny, and from the dominion of error, superstition, and vice, which we doubt not is, in the counsels of a wise and gracious Providence, intended for her.

The Translator has only to add, that while the reception given to the two former parts of his version has been most gratifying to his feelings, he has used his best endeavours to make this third part worthy of equal approbation.

Since the publication of Purgatorio, the following letter has been received by the Translator—

"Caprera, May 14th, 1863.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been favoured by your kind note, together with the admirable translation of DANTE'S PURGATORIO. I beg you to accept my sincere thanks for the honour you have conferred on my Countrymen and myself, by the Dedication of so valuable a work, and also for your friendly wishes in behalf of Italy.—The Sympathy of English Friends is especially grateful to my heart. With much esteem,

"I am, Dear Sir,

"Your truly obliged

"G. GARIBALDI.

"The Rev. John Wesley Thomas."

By the liberality and kindness of Messrs. Goupil and Oback, we are enabled to prefix to this Translation of *Paradiso*, a lithographed copy of their admirable print of Ary Scheffer's DANTE AND BEATRICE; thus greatly enhancing the value of the volume, without any additional charge to the Subscribers. The original Painting appeared in *The Art Treasures'* Exhibition at Manchester in 1857, where it attracted great attention. The splendid line engraving which we have been permitted to copy, reflects great credit on the Engraver and the Publishers.

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ON PARADISE.

THE word *Paradise* does not occur in the authorised English version of the Old Testament, but is found in the original Hebrew in four places: *Neh.* ii. 8, where it is rendered "forest;" *Cant.* iv. 13, "an orchard;" *Eccles.* ii. 5, in the plural, "orchards;" and *Joel* ii. 3, where it is the "garden" of Eden. It is a Persian word, but probably existed also in the languages of ancient Assyria and India. In the original of *Genesis* ii. 8, and iii. 24, the word is not used; but it is employed in the Septuagint and Latin Vulgate versions of those texts. The tradition of Paradise, and its guard of cherubim as described there, and in *Ezekiel* i. 10, appears—1st. In the Assyrian sculptures, the winged bulls, the sacred tree, and the *Feroher* by which it is surmounted. The "Feroher" is a four-winged human figure, encircled by a wheel, with two of its wings stretched out in flight, and two covering its feet.—See VAUX'S *Nineveh and Persepolis*, pp. 221, 226, Ed., 1855. 2nd. The *Peri* of Persian poetry, and *Peristan* (or Fairy-land) the country of the Peris. These are described as of surpassing beauty, a harmless disposition, and a nature between human and angelic.—See D'HERBELOT, *Bib. Orient.* 3rd. The Gins, or Jins (Genii) of the Arabs, Ginnistan, their country, and the great Bird, like a vast Griffon, intelligent, eloquent, and pious, that guards it.—*Ib.* 4th. The Sphinx, or "Androsphynges" of Egypt, mentioned by Herodotus.—*Euterpe*, 175. It was supposed to be a gigantic animal, with the body of a lion, and the face of a man or woman. The sculptured figures of the Sphinx were placed by the Egyptians at the entrance of their temples, of which their kings, who were also high-priests, had the supreme guardianship.—*Ib.* 142, 151. Hence we may recognise in the royal title, *Pharaoh*, and perhaps also in the *Pharos* with its brilliant light, the tradition of Paradise and its flaming guard. 5th. A Hindoo, or Hindostanee word *Pĕrē-désam*, signifying "Fairy-land," is nearly identical with Παραδεισος, used by Xenophon (*Cyrop* i. 12, 15), and other Greek writers, to designate a fruit garden or a park, in which wild animals were kept, and to which the Persians had given the name of *Paradise*. A Hindoo legend says, that a Peacock was placed at the entrance of *Pĕrē-désam*, to warn Adam of approaching danger, and the Snake was directed to assist in repelling it. Iblis deceived these guards and entered. On the expulsion of Adam, he descended on the Peak of Serendib (Ceylon), on the summit of which his foot-print is still to be seen. Eve alighted

at Jeddah, on the Red Sea coast. The Snake fell at Ispahan, the Peacock in Hindostan, and Iblis in Khorassan.—See *Notes and Queries*, 3rd series, viii. 434. 6th. The Fairies, Faerie-land, and the Faerie legends of Mediæval Europe.

> "In oldè dayès of the king Artour,
> Of which that Bretons speké gret honóur,
> All was this land ful filled of faerie;
> The elf-quene, with her joly compagnie,
> Dancèd ful oft in many a grenè mede:
> This was the old opinion as I rede."
>
> CHAUCER, *Wif of Bathes Tale.*

Allusions to, and descriptions of a future state—a life beyond the present life, are necessarily figurative, and the imagery could only be borrowed from the scenes of this life. The Greeks conceived the Invisible world, which they called Hadès, to be divided into two regions, that of punishment for the wicked, and that of happiness for the just. The Hebrews, who named it Sheōl, believed that it contained the abodes of the wicked, and the righteous, divided from each other by a deep chasm; the one a state of torment, which they called Gehinnom, or Geënna; and the other of repose and happiness, which they described as a resting in Abraham's bosom; from the oriental custom of reclining on couches at table; and sometimes called it *Paradise*, as the antitype of the primitive terrestrial Paradise, forfeited by our first parents for themselves and all their posterity. In like manner the New Testament writers refer to Hadès as the abode of disembodied souls; and our Saviour in speaking of its inhabitants, employs the customary terms. He speaks of "the Geënna of fire," and warns us against the danger of being thrown into it.—*Matt.* v. 22, 29, &c. He describes the rich man in torment, the great gulf fixed, and Lazarus afar off in Abraham's bosom—reclining next the Father of the Faithful at the heavenly banquet. The word *Paradise* (Greek Παραδείσος) is used in the New Testament to indicate the condition of the faithful, and the place of their abode in the intermediate state between death and the resurrection. Thus our Saviour, when on the Cross, addressed one who was expiring near him, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."—*Luke* xxiii. 43. St. Paul "was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."—2 *Cor.* xii. 4. The allusion here to the garden of Eden is plain, but it is still plainer where our glorified Redeemer says to the apostle John, in Patmos, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."—*Rev.* ii. 7. The type was delightful and sublime, but the antitype shall far surpass it; and they who are faithful to the end shall attain to a higher state of perfection

and felicity than that from which our first parents fell. Compare the above with *Rom.* v. 15—20: *Rev.* xxii. 1—5.

At the conclusion of the second Canticle of his Trilogy, we left the poet in the Terrestrial Paradise, on the summit of the Mountain of Purgatory, prepared by the draughts of bliss, which he had imbibed from the Well of Life, to mount still higher. He now ascends with Beatrice through the Sphere of Fire, and enters the Celestial Paradise, visiting in succession the nine heavens, presided over by nine orders of celestial beings, and his journey ends in the Empyrean, where he enjoys the beatific vision of the Deity.

While preparing for publication this version of *Paradiso,* and after having written the Dedication and its accompanying Sonnet, the translator was mournfully interrupted by the death of a beloved and incomparable daughter. The stroke was very swift, and quite unlooked for!

> "That Emilie, that fayrer was to sene
> Than is the lilie upon her stalkè grene,
> And fresher than the May with flowrès newe,
> For with the rosè colour strof hire hewe,"

—was about so soon to be cut down like the grass, and fade like the flower of the field, was what he could not anticipate. The peculiar excellence of her disposition and manners was known to many, and could be best appreciated by those who knew her best. From early childhood she had adorned her Christian profession. Her dust reposes in the burial-ground, Mount Pleasant, Leek.

To my Daughter in Paradise.

I saw thee droop; I sat beside thy bed,
My Emily, and heard thy accents faint,
Which whisper'd hope and peace, but no complaint,
For heavenly light was on thy spirit shed,
And Truth had long thy footsteps upward led:
And when thy sire had caught thy latest sighs,
His was the hand that closed thy dying eyes,
Whose own o'erflow'd as he survey'd thee—Dead!
Thine was the angelic smile, the soul refined,
The trust in Him who shall thy dust revive.
And here thy name, with Beatrice's twined,
Shall, o'er the tomb triumphant, yet survive;
For thou, her peer in purity of mind,
Like her didst pass from earth at twenty-five!

THE TRILOGY, &c.

PARADISO.

CANTO I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Subject of Paradiso, and the Invocation. Morning in the Terrestrial Paradise, where Dante and Beatrice yet are. While she gazes on the rising Sun, and Dante contemplates her aspect, he experiences a change which fits him for the intended ascent; and with her is instantaneously caught up to the *Sphere of Fire*. He expresses his wonder, and she clears up a twofold mystery.

THE glory of the Power that moveth all
Pervades the universe,[1] though on our sight

[1] "A spirit intimately sustains, and the different parts pervading,
Mind agitates the mass, and throughout the vast frame is diffused."—VIRGIL, *Æneid.* vi. 726.

"Reason shows in what manner Divine Light shines everywhere; that is, Divine goodness, wisdom, and power. Science in like manner, confirms this testimony: and the Holy Spirit, by Jeremiah says, 'I fill heaven and earth;' and in the Psalm, 'Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence?' And *Sapientia* says, that 'the Spirit of the Lord fills the whole earth:' and *Ecclesiasticus* 42, 'His work is

More there and fewer here its beams may fall.
I have been in that heaven which of His light
Receives most, and saw things which to explain
Who thence descends hath neither skill nor might :[1]
Because our intellect, about to gain
Her chief desire in that profound survey,
Perceives what Memory would retrace in vain.
But of that sacred realm, far as I may,
What in my mind a treasure I have made
Will now become the subject of my lay.
Benign Apollo, this last labour aid ;[2]
Make me thy vessel, with thy might imbue,
And thy loved laurel give, my brow to shade.[3]
One summit of Parnassus hitherto
Sufficed me ; now must I tread both beneath,
While I the race in this last stage pursue.
Enter my bosom, thy own spirit breathe,
As when with Marsyas, in contention placed,[4]

full of the glory of the Lord.' Which also the writings of heathens attest; for Lucan in ix. says, 'Whatever you see, wherever you go, is Jove.' Well therefore have we said, 'A ray of Divine glory shines through the universe, penetrates its essence, and illuminates its existence.' "—DANTE, *Epist. ad Can Grande.*

[1] In the Empyrean, where the Divine glory shines brightest. See 2 *Cor.* xii. 1-4, and *Inferno* ii. 12.

[2] This invocation has been imitated by CHAUCER, *Book of Fame*, lib. 3.

[3] The laurel is called *amato* in allusion to the fable of Daphne (*Purg.* xxii. 113. note), "beloved" by Apollo, and, who flying from him, invoked the aid of the gods, and was changed into a laurel.

[4] He asks that power of Melody which Apollo exerted when he overcame his competitor Marsyas, the supposed inventor of

Thou from their covering didst his limbs unsheathe.
O Power Divine, should I be so much graced,
That of yon blissful realm the memory
On me impress'd may now by me be traced,
I shall be seen approach thy favorite tree,
And with its leaves then crown myself, if thou
And my high theme such merit give to me.
So rarely gather'd, Father, for the brow
With triumph crown'd, of Emperor or Bard,[1]
(Of human wills the fault and scandal now)
To the blithe Delphic deity, regard
For the Penean leaf[2] new joy should bring,
When any mortal thirsts for that reward.
From one small spark a mighty blaze may spring;
And after me some poet's prayer may rise
Which, better sung, may Cirrha's[3] answer bring.

the flute; who, having challenged him to a trial of musical skill, accepted the condition, that the skin of the vanquished should be the victor's prize. Each exerted his utmost ability, and Apollo having won with great difficulty, tied his rival to a tree, and flayed him alive. That this example of their Patron has not been lost on the *genus irritabile vatum*, the terrible inflictions in the *Inferno* of DANTE, the *Achitophel* of DRYDEN, and the *Dunciad* of POPE, sufficiently show.

[1] "The laurell, meed of mightie conquerors
And poets sage."
SPENCER'S *Faerie Queene*, B. i. & i. l. 9.

[2] So called from the river Peneus in Thessaly, on the banks of which laurels grew in abundance; whence Daphne was fabled to be a daughter of this river.

[3] A city in Phocis, at the foot of Mount Parnassus. It was the port of Delphi, and had a temple of Apollo. The poet intimates that, stimulated by his example, some poet might succeed him whose invocation of Apollo would win still greater favour.

Through divers passages to human eyes[1]
Climbs the world's light; but by that one afar
Which through four circles and three crosses lies,[2]
With better course and with benigner star,
He issues now, and mundane things like wax
Temper'd and stamp'd more to his method are.
Morn here and evening there had in his tracks
Come by such path, and clothed that hemisphere
In brightness, which the other, darkling, lacks;[3]
When Beatrice upon the left side there,
Turn'd round and gazing on the sun, I saw:[4]

[1] The Sun is here said to arise through various "foci," openings, or passages, because in different seasons of the year he emerges in different signs of the Zodiac, and never on two successive days from exactly the same point of the horizon.

[2] Of this "dark saying," the first explanation is *an astronomical* one. When the sun rises at the time of the Vernal Equinox, the equinoctial colure intersects the horizon, the equator, and the ecliptic, at the same point, and forms a cross with each of those circles, as may be seen in the Armillary Sphere, invented long before Dante's time. *Spring* is the season indicated.

The second interpretation is *metaphorical.* The Sun of Righteousness—the Light of the World, has visited it at sundry times and in divers manners, but in the fulness of time, when the last of the *four* great empires flourished, and from the place where stood the *three crosses* on one of which He died who, though sinless, "was numbered with the transgressors," Religion in its most advanced and perfect form, went forth from the East, joined with a better Star (*Matt.* ii. 2, 9, 10, *Rev.* xxii. 16) to temper and impress mankind with its own benign spirit and manners.

[3] It was morning in the Eastern hemisphere, where the Earthly Paradise was in which Dante is here supposed to be; and night in the opposite or Western hemisphere.

[4] Beatrice, looking eastward, being in the Southern hemisphere, turns to the left for a sight of the rising Sun. See *Purg.* iv. 57, and note.

No eagle such fix'd gaze thereon might bear.
And as the reflex ray, by Nature's law,
From the first glancing reascends above,[1]
Like pilgrim turning who would homewards draw,[2]
So to like act, her eyes and gesture move
My fancy, and I gazed more steadfastly
Upon the Sun than would our use approve.
There much is lawful which would here not be
Within our power; this to the place is owing,
Created for the human family.[3]
Not long I bore the sight so fiercely glowing,
Yet long enough to see it sparkle round,
Like molten iron from the furnace flowing.[4]
At once it seem'd new day the day had crown'd;
As if that He who what he wills can do,
To deck the heavens another sun had found.[5]

[1] Dante's gesture and look reflecting those of Beatrice, he compares to the reflected ray, which springs from the direct ray at the angle of incidence.

"As the traveller in a foreign country, with all effort and diligence hastens to get home, and looks not backward, but unto the home he has left, desires to return," &c.—*Vision of Alberic*, Sect. 25.

[3] The Earthly Paradise, which was made for Man in his primeval state of innocence and perfection.

[4] "Burning and emitting sparks, like iron when drawn from the furnace."—*Vision of Alberic*, Sect. 5.

[5] Chaucer, in *The House of Fame*, having a little before mentioned Vergile and Daunt (Dante) employs the same comparison:—

"But if the Heaven had y wonne
All new of God another sonne."—Bk. i. ad fin.

"Ruggier stood firm, and when her veil he raised,
He seem'd to give another sun to heaven."

ARIOSTO, *Orl. Fur.* x. 109.

With eyes intent the eternal orbs to view,
Stood Beatrice, and I on her fix'd mine,
When from above my vision I withdrew.
Such change came o'er me from her face divine,
As Glaucus[1] felt, whom tasted herbs a fate
Among the other sea-gods did assign.
I cannot that supernal change relate
In words; but them this fact suffices quite
For whom grace keeps experience of that state.
If I was only what of late thy might
Created me, O Love, that rulest the skies,
Thou know'st, who thus hast raised me by thy light.[2]

"Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn
Risen on mid-noon."—*Paradise Lost*, v. 309.

[1] A Fisherman of Bœotia. Observing that the fishes he had caught, when laid on the grass acquired fresh vigour, and leaping from him escaped into the sea, he tasted the herbs there growing, and felt himself suddenly prompted to follow them; which having done, he, at the request of the sea-gods, was changed and admitted into their society by Oceanus and Tethys.—Ovid, *Metam.* xiii. 904-963. Glaucus, as some explain, was an able diver, and was accidentally drowned. Shakspeare alludes to the tale when he makes Ariel sing:—

"Full fathoms five thy father lies:
Of his bones are corals made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something new and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Hark! now I hear them,—ding-dong-bell."
The Tempest, Act i. sc. ii.

[2] "Thou knowest whether I was out of the body, and had only the soul received from thee,"—according to the doctrine of

Soon as the wheel which thou dost eternize,[1]
O thou desired one, had with harmony,[2]
By thee attuned and tempered, caught mine eyes,
From the Sun's flame so much of heaven to me
Appear'd on fire,[3] no lake with rain or river
Was e'er expanded so diffusively.
The novel sound[4] and the great light, however,
Raised, for their cause, my curiosity;
Such eager longing I before felt never.

the immediate creation and infusion of human souls, as held by Dante. See *Purg.* xxv. 68-72.

[1] In those glorious works of God, the heavenly bodies, we see exemplified—that which human art finds unattainable—*Perpetual Motion.*

[2] Dante alludes to the doctrine of Plato that the heavens are attracted by the love of God, and that the resulting motion produces the harmony of the spheres.

[3] They had been caught up to the sphere of fire.—See *Purg.* ix. 30, and note.

[4] The sound of the harmony mentioned in line 77. Pythagoras conceived that the celestial spheres in which he supposed the planets to move, striking on the ether through which they pass, must produce sounds varying according to the diversity of their magnitudes, motions, and distances; and that the most perfect harmony is produced by their revolutions. Hence his disciples, to exalt the fame of their master, said that he was the only mortal whom the Gods had permitted to hear the Music of the Spheres.—See ENFIELD's *Hist. of Philosophy*, B. ii. ch. xii. sec. i.

Milton sublimely says of the heavenly bodies,

"And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones that God's own ear
Listens delighted."—*Par. Lost*, v. 625.

"Heaven is not mute, as mortal men suppose;
But we are deaf, because our ears we close
To sounds divine; or wayward from our birth
But listen to the ruder sounds of earth."

And she, who knew as I did, ere I spoke,
My wish, to quiet my perplexity,
Ere I could ask her, thus the silence broke;
"Thou dost with unsubstantial fantasy
Make thyself dull, hence thou hast not perceived
What, hadst thou thrown off that, thou needs must see.
Thou'rt not on earth, as is by thee believed;
But ne'er so swift flash'd lightning from its home,
As thy ascent thereto thou hast achieved."
Yet if my former doubt was overcome,
By the brief words thus utter'd with a smile,
O'er me a new one more perplex'd had come.
"To that great marvel thou dost reconcile
My thoughts," I said, "but how I mount so high
O'er these light bodies, puzzles me meanwhile."
Then, after she had heaved a pitying sigh,
She look'd upon me, as a mother bends
O'er a delirious child her loving eye;
And said, "A principle of order blends
With all things, and this law of symmetry
To the whole universe God's likeness lends.[1]
Here the high creatures[2] that impression see
Of the Eternal Might, which is the end
For which this ordinance hath its decree.[3]
Now in this order, which I speak of, tend
All natures, varying in their different sorts,

[1] The uniformity of *Plan* observable in the universe, is the image and evidence of the Divine Unity. The advancement of Science has augmented this evidence greatly, since Dante's time.

[2] Creatures who possess intelligence.

[3] "For the invisible things of Him, even his eternal power and Godhead, since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."—*Rom.* i. 20.

And more or less toward their first source ascend.
Thus they are wafted on to different ports[1]
Through the great Sea of Being, each to steer
By instinct which impels it and supports.[2]
This bears the fire up towards the lunar sphere,
This has the power in mortal hearts to move,
This binds the earth and makes its parts cohere.
This bow projects not only those who rove,
Creatures devoid of reason, but indeed
Those who possess both intellect and love.
That Providence whence all things thus proceed,
With its own light keeps always calm that sky
In which revolves the heaven of greatest speed.[3]

[1] Ends, aims, or purposes.

[2] By that inward stimulus, inclination, or propensity, with which the Creator has endowed it. The word *Instinct* is here used in a large and comprehensive sense; as if Dante had guessed some law or principle of which gravitation, the ascent of flame, animal appetite, human passion, and the moral sense of mankind, were modifications or effects, a cause intermediate between these and the will of the Creator.—See *Inf.* vii. 77; *Purg.* xviii. 28-30.

"Each thing has its especial love, as simple bodies have an innate love to their proper place. And as earth always tends to the centre, so does fire to the upper circumference near the heaven of the Moon, and therefore always mounts to that."—DANTE, *Convito.*

[3] The *Empyrean*, which is without motion, encloses all; and has next to it the *Primum Mobile*, which being, of those that move, most distant from the centre, turns round most swiftly. Such was the Ptolomaic system, which Dante followed. In his *Convito*, he says of the *Primum Mobile*, that "by its most fervent appetency to be conjoined with the heaven which is most quiet and divine (the Empyrean), it revolves within that with such great desire that its velocity is almost incomprehensible."

And now, as to our destined seat on high,
We're thither borne by force of that strong cord,
Which always at a joyful mark lets fly.
'Tis true that, as full oft will not accord
The Sculptured form with the design of Art,
Since marble slowly will response afford;
So from this course the creature may depart
Full oft, because it has, when thus launch'd forth,
The power of bending towards a different part.
And as the fire which in the cloud has birth
Is seen to fall, souls by false pleasure so
From their first impulse may be warp'd to earth.[1]
Nor shouldst thou marvel more, if aught I know,
At thy ascent, than from the mountain crest
That the rough torrent should descend below.[2]
As strange 'twould be if thou, no more depress'd
By aught obstructing,[3] hadst below remained,
As that the living fire[4] on earth should rest."
Then turning she her heavenward look regain'd.

[1] It often happens that, through the intractableness of the material, the work of the artist does not fully accord with his intention; so if man fails to attain the end of his being, it is by his own fault, through allowing himself to be drawn aside therefrom by false pleasure.

[2] "—— But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale. . .
Let such bethink them (if the sleepy drench
Of that oblivious lake benumb not still)
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat; descent and fall
To us are adverse."—*Par. Lost*, ii. 70.

[3] By carnal propensities and corrupt affections.—See *Purg.* xii. 94-96; xiv. 148-150.

[4] The ethereal fire.—See line 114, and note.

CANTO II.

THE ARGUMENT.

Difficulty of the subject, and need of supernatural wisdom. Dante and Beatrice ascend to *the Moon*. Doubts concerning the spots which are seen on the Moon's disc. Dante's conjecture, which Beatrice refutes; and explains the cause of the phenomenon, according to the Philosophy of the Middle Ages.

O ye who fain would listen to my song,
Following in your small bark across the main[1]
My vessel, as I singing sail along,
Turn back to view your native coast again:
Brave not the ocean, lest your courage fail,
And, losing me, bewildered you remain.
Ne'er was the water cross'd on which I sail:[2]
Minerva breathes the gale, while steers Apollo,
And the nine Muses show the Bears[3] I hail.

[1] In launching again the vessel of his genius on the wide sea of immensity, Dante warns the feeble-minded, who are not equipped for such a voyage, to give over the enterprise, lest unable to keep up with him in his progress, they should be bewildered and lost.

[2] Virgil, Horace, Lucretius, and Ariosto have said the same: and who does not remember Milton's invocation of the "heavenly Muse" to aid him while he sung

"Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

[3] Not Ursæ Major et Minor, as in the commencement of

Ye other few, directing toward heaven's hollow,
  Your look betimes for angels' food,[1] which we
  May feed on here, and yet no surfeit follow;[2]
Your vessel you may launch on this deep sea
  With safety, if along my track you go,
  Ere the cleft waters reunited be.[3]
The chiefs who sail'd to Colchos long ago,
  Were, less than you will be, struck with amaze,
  When Jason plough'd, the dragons' teeth to sow.[4]

Purgatorio he had hailed the Southern Heavens, but the Spiritual Guides mentioned in *Purgatorio*, xxx. 1-7. Instead of *nove*, nine, Biagioli reads *nuove*, new; and this reading has been followed by Cary and Wright. But why *new* Muses? Dante here associates the Muses with Apollo and Minerva; we therefore cannot doubt that the *ancient Nine* are intended.

[1] "Man did eat angels' food."—*Psalm* lxxviii. 25. "O happy those few who sit at that table where the bread of angels is eaten! And wretched those whose food is only that which they have in common with brute creatures."—DANTE, Beginning of *Convito*.

[2] "How charming is Divine Philosophy!
  Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
  But musical, as is Apollo's lute,
  And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
  Where no crude surfeit reigns."
MILTON, *Comus*, l. 476.

[3] "Those who are accustomed to Divine Contemplation may safely launch forth on a subject so vast and profound, provided they follow closely where I lead the way."

[4] See *Inferno*, xviii. 86, and note. One of the conditions imposed on Jason by Æetes, King of Colchos, before allowing him to carry off the golden fleece, was that he should tame certain bulls that breathed fire, and had brazen feet and horns, and with them plough a field sacred to Mars. He was then to sow the ground with dragons' teeth, from which armed men would arise and direct their fury against him who ploughed the field.

That thirst for the celestial world which sways
The soul, innate and ceaseless,[1] made us rise,
Swift almost as the heavens[2] on which you gaze.
I look'd on Beatrice, while she her eyes,
Directed upwards: quick as from the string,
To hit the mark, the loosen'd arrow flies,
I had alighted where a wond'rous thing
Drew my attention; and my guide still near,
Who could not but perceive my pondering,
Turn'd towards me with such beauty as good cheer:
"Offer thy heart's best thanks to God," said she,
"By whom we have been brought to this first sphere."[3]
A cloud now cover'd us, it seem'd to me;
Bright, solid, firm, and polish'd, we descried it,
Like diamond sunlit, shining brilliantly.
The eternal pearl, as into it we glided,
Received us as the watery world receives
A ray of light, remaining undivided.
If I embodied was, and none conceives

Assisted by the magic arts of Medea, the King's daughter, who had fallen in love with him, Jason accomplished the task; and when assailed by the armed men he threw a stone among them, on which they ceased to assail him, and turned their arms against each other.

"By mutual wounds the earth-born brothers perish,
And fall in civil slaughter."—Ovid, *Metam*, vii. 100-142.

[1] The desire of celestial blessedness, or that innate tendency of the soul to mount above, mentioned, Canto i. 138, and note.

[2] And which, in Dante's time, were supposed to be whirled round the earth once in every four and twenty hours.

[3] The sphere of the Moon, the nearest to the earth, and the first reached in an ascent therefrom.

"There appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed

Here how one mass another can enfold,
Or body body with itself inweaves,[1]
More ardent it should make us to behold
That Essence in which is discover'd how
God can himself join'd with our nature hold.
There will be seen the truth to which we bow,
Not proved, but shown self-evidentially,
Like those first principles which all allow.[2]
I answer'd, "Lady, as devotedly
I offer thanks to Him, as I am able,
Who from a mortal world hath wafted me.
But tell me, what are yonder stains of sable
Traced on this body, which below on earth
Make some relate of Cain their jesting fable?"[3]
She gently smiled; then answer'd: "If such dearth
Exist in human minds to judge aright,
Where sense the key to open holds not forth,
Surely the shafts of wonder should not smite

with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."—*Rev.* xii. 1.

[1] Dante regards the entrance of his body into the supposed luminous atmosphere of the moon, and the passage of a ray of light through water, as inconsistent with the metaphysical axiom that two bodies cannot occupy the same place at the same time. But the displacement of a portion of the atmosphere equal in bulk to the body immersed in the one case, and the permeability of water by light, will obviate the seeming inconsistency. The axiom itself appears doubtful, when viewed in the light of modern chemical science.

[2] The axioms of geometry, and the common sentiments of mankind. Plato, in the sixth book of his Republic, mentions four sources of evidence:—Intuition, Demonstration, Faith, or a Belief in testimony, and Probable Opinion or Conjecture.

[3] See *Inferno*, xx. 124, and note.

Thee now, because in following after sense,
Thou seest thy reason's wings are short for flight.
But tell me what is thy own inference."
I answer'd, "That which here looks variously
I think is caused by bodies rare and dense."[1]
She said, "Thou surely thy belief wilt see
In error drown'd, if thou but listen to
What I shall say to prove its contrary.
For the eighth sphere[2] its lights holds out to view
Numerous, and in their size and quality
They may be seen of different aspects too.[3]
If rare and dense had caused it so to be,
One virtue would their influence constitute
Alike, or differing only in degree.
Their different virtues needs must be the fruit
Of formal principles:[4] these, all save one,

[1] Dante says in his *Convito*, "The shadow in the moon is nothing else but the rarity of its body, which hinders the rays of the sun from terminating and being reflected, as in the other parts of it." But the opinion which he had thus expressed, he makes Beatrice here correct.

[2] The sphere of the Fixed Stars.

[3] "One star differeth from another star in glory."—1 *Cor.* xv. 41.

[4] Plato held the original existence of matter without form, but capable of receiving all forms, and undergoing every kind of change: and that these forms, by which it is rendered perceptible to our senses, it owes to the energy of the Divine intellectual nature. See *Timæus*. In the Scholastic Philosophy, "the formal principle," as distinguished from the "material principle," was that which out of the same common matter produced one or more objects generically or specifically different from all others. It appears to be identical with the "substantial forms" mentioned *Purgatorio*, xviii. 49-51, and note.

The Mediæval Schoolmen, in their treatment of Natural Philo-

Thy reasoning, if admitted, would confute.[1]
Again, if rareness caused these blots of dun
Of which thou speakest, through and through, I ween,
This planet's disc such partial void must run.
Or else, as in a hog the fat and lean,
So here, like leaves within a volume wide,
The dense and rare in layers would be seen.
If 't were the former, it would be descried
Whene'er the sun's eclipsed, because the light
Would through it shine, like aught else rarefied.
It is not so; then let us try aright

sophy, instead of attending to the real properties of bodies, and investigating the laws of nature by experiment and observation, adopted vague and obscure principles of reasoning, and always confounded physics with metaphysics. Thomas Aquinas, among other profundities, derives the occult operations of nature from the forms of things which exist in their bodies; and supposes the formal principles of such bodies to be celestial bodies, which by their accession or recession cause the production or decay of the inferior bodies. Whence he concludes that these occult forms are capable of being restored to higher principles; namely, celestial bodies, or even to separate intellectual substances, which in their respective operations leave traces of themselves.—See ENFIELD's *Hist. of Philosophy*, B. vii. ch. iii. sect. 3.

[1] All except the principle of diversity; that is, of rarity and density, which Dante had assigned as the cause of the phenomenon.

Dante makes Beatrice argue, that if the different appearances of the heavenly bodies were occasioned by the difference in their degrees of density, their influences would be alike in character, and only differ in degree: and that as (according to the system of Judicial Astrology, then generally admitted) the stars have different and even opposite influences, these must result from different formal principles belonging to them, and not from their different degrees of density.

The other case; if that I overthrow,
Thy notion will be proved mistaken quite.
If then this rareness pass not through, we know,
There must exist some limit, where the dense
Its passage further on will not allow.
So that the Sun-beam entering would be thence
Reflected, even as colour is through glass,[1]
With lead concealed behind its crystal fence.
Thou'lt say, that of such spots there is a class
More dark than those we see in other parts,
Because from greater depths they have to pass.
From this demur Experiment imparts
To thee deliverance, if her aid thou prove,
Sole fountain to the rivers of your arts.[2]
Three mirrors take, and two of them remove
A short way off, the third a greater space,
Between the two first; let thine eyes then rove
And towards them turn'd, a light behind thee place,
So that its rays when shining on the three,
From all reflected shall their path retrace.
Then, though the one the most remote from thee
Less ample in extent of outline seems,
An equal brightness thou in all wilt see.[3]

[1] See *Inferno*, xxiii. 25, and note.

[2] We here see that the principle of the Inductive Philosophy was *known* to Dante, although so little attended to and so seldom acted on in his time.

[3] Such is the space-penetrating property of *light* that the fixed stars, although at such distances that when viewed through a telescope they seem indivisible points, appear *brilliant* even to the naked eye. Their light, and also the light reflected by the moon and planets, and by every *white* body, is undimmed by the grey haze of the atmosphere, which makes itself visible when

Now as the ground struck by the Sun's hot beams,
Lies bare, while frosts and snows no more confine,
And winter's cold bright hue no longer gleams;
Thus bared thy spirit, by these proofs of mine,
Of living light I'll give thee such supplies,
That in thy sight its tremulous beam shall shine.
Within the heaven of peace divine[1] there lies
A circling body,[2] in whose influence
Of all contain'd therein the existence lies.
The next,[3] whose light so many stars dispense,
That being parts through divers essences,
Distinct from but within its orbed fence.
The other spheres[4] in their varieties
The differing powers they have among them, so
Dispose as to fulfil their purposes.
These organs of the world in this way go,
Now seest thou, down the graduated steep;[5]

interposed between other objects and the eye, in proportion to their distance and the *darkness* of their colours.

[1] The Empyrean.

[2] The Crystalline, or Primum Mobile.

[3] The Heaven of the Fixed Stars.

[4] The spheres in which the seven planets of the Ptolemaic System are fixed, according to the theory accepted by Dante, and not wholly discarded in Milton's time.

"They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd."—*Par. Lost*, iii. 481.

[5] The Empyrean is here supposed to shed virtue on the Primum Mobile, the Primum Mobile on that of the Fixed Stars, and so downward; each heaven being understood to influence directly and immediately that which is next below it, and intermediately all beneath.

What from above they take they shed below.[1]
Mark with attention how my way I keep
Through this place to the truth of thy desire,
That thou mayst learn alone to ford the deep.
The sacred orbs, whose motions never tire,
And influence, like the stroke which workmen deal,
The blessed movers[2] must themselves inspire.
And that fair heaven that gems with stars its wheel,
Receives its impress from the Mind profound
Which turns it,[3] and itself becomes a seal.[4]
And as the soul which in your dust is found,
Through different members, in conformity
With divers powers and faculties is bound,
Even so intelligence its bounty free
Unfolding through the stars hath multiplied,
Revolving still on its own unity.
The varying virtue variously applied,
Leagues with each previous orb it vivifies,[5]
In which, just like the life in you, 'tis tied.
Through that blithe nature, whence its full supplies
Of mingled virtue flow, this orb shines bright,
Like joy seen sparkling through the living eyes.
This is the cause why light compared with light
Appears to differ, not from dense and rare;
This is the formal principle whose might,
With grace according, makes the dusk and fair.

[1] "Drawn from the stars, and filter'd through the skies."
[2] The angels. See *Inferno*, vii. 77—96, and notes.
[3] The angel presiding over the eighth or starry sphere.
[4] Impressing those below it.
[5] See 1 *Cor.* xv. 41.

CANTO III.

THE ARGUMENT.

In the *Planet of Mutability*, the Moon, Dante sees the shades of those who having made monastic vows have returned by compulsion to a secular life. He converses with Picarda, the sister of Forese, who explains to him the condition of those to whom a place is assigned in this lowest or lunar sphere. She points out to him the shade of the Empress Constance; and singing *Ave Maria*, disappears.

That Sun[1] which erst had warm'd my heart with love,
To me had open'd now the aspect sweet
Of beauteous truth, disproving thus to prove.[2]
And then that I, as much as it was meet,
Might own myself convinced and satisfied,
I raised my head that purpose to complete.
But suddenly a vision I descried,
Which to itself my whole attention drew,
And from remembrance my confession died.
As through transparent and smooth glass, or through
Clear tranquil waters, yet not so profound
As to conceal the bottom from our view,[3]
The pictured outlines of our forms rebound,

[1] Beatrice: in allusion to Canto ii. 106—111.

[2] By her arguments in Canto ii. disproving what was false, for the purpose of establishing what was true.

[3] A lake too deep for the bottom to be visible, shows more distinctly the objects reflected from its surface.

So soften'd, that the pearl on some fair brow
Shines not more faintly from so white a ground:[1]
So saw I faces prompt for utterance now,
Whence I in error fell, to that opposed[2]
Which made Narcissus o'er the fountain bow.
Soon as I saw them, I at first supposed
They were reflected forms, and turn'd to see
Those whom, as in a mirror, they disclosed:
And seeing no one, turned again to be
Directly in the light of my sweet guide,
Whose holy eyes beam'd glowing smiles on me.
"Think it no marvel that I smiled," she cried,
"When I perceive thy childish thought misplaced,
Since on the truth not yet thy feet abide,
But have to vanity their way retraced.
True substances are those thou dost survey,
Who here for failure of their vows are placed.[3]
Speak with them, listen, trusting what they say:
For the true Light that glads them with its beam,
Their feet ne'er suffers from itself to stray."
Then to the shade whose looks most eager seem
For converse, I, her longing to relieve,
Spoke, as one harass'd by desire extreme:

[1] The white pearl on the white brow would be as indistinct.

[2] Narcissus mistook a reflection in water for substance; Dante mistakes real persons for their shadowy reflection. See *Inferno*, xxx. 129, note.

[3] Milton says of the moon, in opposition to the use to which it has been put by Ariosto and others;—

"Those argent fields more likely habitants,
Translated saints, or middle spirits, hold,
Betwixt angelical and human kind."

Paradise Lost, iii. 460.

"O fair-created soul who dost perceive
Of life eternal the sweet rays, which he
Who hath not tasted never can conceive,[1]
I shall be much delighted, if to me
Thou tell thy name and sketch your lot immortal."
Then promptly and with radiant look, said she:
"Our charity will never lock the portal
On a just wish, than His not less benign,
Who loving as Himself would have his court all.
On earth a virgin sister's lot was mine,
And who I was thy memory will suffice
To show, though I in greater beauty shine.
That I'm Picarda,[2] thou mayst recognize,
Who here am placed amidst these other blest:
Blest am I in the sphere that slowest hies.[3]
The Holy Spirit hath alone our best
Affections by his pleasure warm'd, and they
Rejoice to be controll'd by his behest.
And if the state seems low in which we stay,
To us 'tis given since we neglectful grew,
And somewhat miss'd, through vows made void, our [way."

[1] See *Isaiah*, lxiv. 4.

[2] See *Purgatario*, xxiv. 10. She was the sister of Corso Donati, and of Forese. See *Purgatario*, xxiii. 48, and note.

Petrarch is supposed to allude to this lady in the following passage:

"Then one I saw, shut up in convent home
On Arno, for salvation, but in vain;
By force of others her fair thought o'ercome."
Triumph of Chastity, l. 160, &c.

[3] The lunar sphere which, in the Ptolemaic theory, moved slowest, like that part of a revolving wheel which is nearest the axle.

I answer'd; "In your wondrous looks I view
A splendour so divine, I know not how,
Which from all former knowledge changes you.
My quick remembrance this did not allow;
But what thou tellest so assisteth me,
The recognition is much easier now.[1]
But ye who here are happy, do not ye,
Tell me, a loftier place than this desire,
More to behold and more beloved to be?"
Exchanging smiles first with the shades just by her,[2]
She answer'd me with so much of delight,
That in her seem'd to glow Love's primal fire.
"Brother, the force of charity hath quite
Composed our will to will alone whate'er
We have, nor for aught else leaves appetite.
If we were eager for a higher sphere,
Our wishes with His will would not agree
Whose fiat holds us in seclusion here,[3]
Such discord in these rounds could never be;
Here Charity must dwell, as thou wilt gather,
If thou observe her nature heedfully.
It is our special bliss, our being rather,
That one desire should all our bosoms fill,
And keep within the will of our high Father.
Hence our succession, ranged from sill to sill
Throughout this realm, to us true pleasure brings,

[1] Dante recognizes her by her voice.

[2] They are pleased to learn from Dante's inquiries, that he is in earnest pursuit of truth.

[3] They are perfectly content with their condition, though in the lowest of the celestial mansions. The contrary feeling would be a kind of impiety, impossible to the souls of the blessed.

As to our King, who in us plants his will.
And peace is in that will, to which all things
As to an ocean vast move onward, even
What he creates and what from nature springs."[1]
It then seem'd clear how every place in heaven
Is Paradise, though of its highest joys
The showers are not in equal measure given.
But as it happens, if one dainty cloys,
Yet appetite we for another have;
For this we ask, thanksgiving that employs.
Thus I to learn, by word and gesture crave,
What was the web her shuttle had forborne
To reach the end of. She this answer gave:
"A perfect life and merit rare have borne
High up in heaven a lady,[2] by whose laws
Down in yon world the veil and vest are worn.
For this they wake and sleep till death, because
That Spouse accepts each vow which Charity

[1] Dante supposes angels and the souls of men to be alike produced by immediate creation.

[2] St. Clara, foundress of a religious order or "*Setta* (Sect)," called after her. She was born of noble parentage, at Assissi in Italy, became a disciple of St. Francis, and in her eighteenth year entered the Benedictine Convent of St. Paul's. St. Francis made her Superior of a new house, where she was joined by her sister, and many ladies of illustrious families. Her views and practice were ascetic in the extreme, and she and her community subjected themselves to the greatest austerities. In a few years she founded monasteries in all the principal cities of Italy, and many towns of Germany. She died A.D. 1253, at the age of 60, and was canonized by Alexander IV. in 1255. Her festival is August 12, the anniversary of her funeral. Camden says that the family name of Sinclair among us is derived from St. Clare.—A. BUTLER, *Lives of Saints.*

From those conform'd to his good pleasure draws.
To follow her when young, and wrapping me
In her close habit, from the world I fled;
And promised of her life and sect to be.
But men, who more to ill than good were bred,
Then snatch'd me forth from the sweet cloister dear:
God knows too, after that what life I led.[1]
This other splendour also shown thee here,
Whose beauty is on my right hand displayed,
Kindled with all the radiance of our sphere,
Was once a sister: my narration made
Of me, is of her tale the counterpart.
Thus from her head the sacred wimple's shade
They took; and when, averse on her own part,
Against good use, back to the world she pass'd,
The veil was never loosen'd from her heart.
A view of the Great Constance[2] here thou hast
Wife of the Second Swabian wind,[3] whence sprung
That puissance which was the third and last."
So she address'd me; and commencing sung

[1] Her having led a secular life, not an immoral one, after her compulsory nuptials, is all that can be inferred from Dante's narrative of Picarda, except the fact, that she might afterwards have re-entered the cloister. A foolish legend is related of her on monkish authority, which makes her die of leprosy a few days after her nuptials and before their consummation.

[2] The Empress Constance, daughter of Roger I. of Sicily, wife of the Emperor Henry VI., and mother of Frederick II. See *Purgatario*, iii. 113, and note.

[3] The second emperor of the Swabian dynasty, Henry VI., whose detention of Richard Cœur de Lion when returning from the Crusade, has cast so deep a stain on his memory. His son Frederick II. was the third and last.

Ave Maria,[1] and then vanish'd quite,
Like something heavy the deep waves among.[2]
As far as it was possible, my sight
Pursued her, till beyond it she had got;
When to the goal of my supreme delight
I turn'd, on Beatrice wholly bent, who shot
The lightning of her glance upon me, so
That at the first my sight sustained it not;
And this, to question her, made me more slow. 130

[1] *Ave Maria, gratia plena,* &c. A form of prayer to the Blessed Virgin, placed between the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in the *Roman Breviary.*

[2] It will be remembered that the Moon, in which Dante now was, is described in canto ii. as having a luminous atmosphere.

CANTO IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

While Dante yet remains in the Lunar Sphere two other doubts of his are solved by Beatrice, who instructs him respecting the habitation of blessed spirits, and the distinction between a will that bears up against force, and one that suffers itself to be overcome thereby. He inquires whether by subsequent good works it is possible to make satisfaction for broken vows.

BETWEEN two feasts at equal distance placed,
If equally inviting both appear,
A man would starve before he'd either taste:[1]

[1] This is taken from Thomas Aquinas's *Summ. Theolog.*, and shows how little the method of experiment, so highly praised by Dante (see Canto ii. 96, and note), was then acted on in philosophizing. At a time when logic was preferred to experiment, it appears to have been seriously believed that, in the case supposed, a man would starve through inability to make a choice, a supposition which implies a most foolish choice! A sensible ass, if he could be made to understand the question, whether, if placed between two bundles of hay, he would feel any difficulty in choosing, would readily say or bray, "Try me!" Certainly *we* find no difficulty in making a selection, when the choice lies between the experimental method of Bacon, and the Mediæval chopped straw and dry chaff of logic and metaphysics.

The human will has been compared to a pair of scales, and the motives by which it is influenced, to the weights. But, without insisting that if the beam be not true, or the scales not equal, the result will be unfairly influenced; we observe that the human will is not like the balance, an absolutely dead thing, but a living faculty endowed with a self-determining power.

So 'twixt two savage wolves, in equal fear
Of their fierce hunger would a lamb remain:
And thus a dog would stand between two deer.[1]
Even so did equal doubts my mind retain
Suspended, silent through necessity.
Hence from self-praise or censure I abstain.
Silent I was; yet any one might see
My wish and prayer depicted in my face,
Which even than words appeal'd more ardently.
So did my Guide, what Daniel did to chase
From Nabuchadonosor's mind that ire
Which prompted him to acts unjust and base.[2]
She said, "I plainly see how each desire
Draws thee with equal force, and thus thy care
Fetters itself, nor freely can respire.
Thou arguest, If my will continue fair,
My honest merit and my happy state too,
Why should another's violence impair?
Another cause thou findest for debate too;
That souls are seen returning to the stars,
According to the doctrine taught by Plato.[3]

[1] "As a tiger impelled by hunger, when he listens
To the lowing of two herds of oxen in a valley,
Knows not which he shall rush on, and to rush on both is burning."—OVID, *Metam.*, v. 164—166.

But Ovid had more sense than to say that the tiger would starve before he could rush on either.

[2] She relieved the poet from his doubts, as Daniel did Nebuchadnezzar. See *Daniel* ii.

[3] —— "Or unsphere
The spirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold

Since of these questions each thy will so jars
That thou canst not perceive their pressure vary,
I'll touch that first which with most venom wars.
Not the sublimest seraph luminary
Not Moses, holy Samuel, no nor John,
Take which thou wilt,[1] I tell thee not even Mary,
In other heaven are seated than the one
Which those pure souls just seen by thee have found,
Nor more nor fewer will their years run on:
But all make beautiful the primal round,
And variously hold that sweet life, as they
With more or less of breath divine abound.
Not as in their allotted sphere to stay,
Appear'd they here, but that they might a sign
Of this the least exalted heaven display.[2]
To suit your wit we thus our words design,
Because through sense alone it apprehends
What in your intellect at last may shine.[3]
On this account the Scripture condescends

> The immortal mind that hath forsook
> Her mansion in this fleshy nook."
>
> MILTON, *Il Penseroso*, l. 88.

In the system of the universe, as described by Plato in his *Timæus*, a soul is assigned to every star; and the souls that have lived well on earth are to return to the stars, and there enjoy a blessed existence.

[1] Either John the Baptist, or John the Evangelist.

[2] Heaven is the common abode of angels and saints, though all are not *equally* elevated and glorified. "In my Father's house are many mansions."—*John* xiv. 2.

[3] The Aristotelian apothegm, "Nihil in intellectu quod non prius fuit in sensu," is the basis of Locke's doctrine that man has no innate ideas. Our capacity for knowledge, but no actual knowledge, is *born* with us. Through the senses we import the

To your estate, ascribing to the Lord[1]
Both feet and hands, yet otherwise intends.
And Holy Church's tints a sight afford,[2]
With human face, of Gabriel, Michael too,
And him who Tobit's[3] perish'd sight restored.
The judgement which of souls Timæus drew
Is much unlike what here we see they are;
If we his words deem literally true.
He says, the Soul returns to her own star,
Deeming that thence cut off she has descended,[4]

raw material of our knowledge; but some ideas, of the first necessity, are of home growth, and are born *in* us, if not with us, the product of consciousness and reflection. Such are the ideas we have of time, space, power, volition, mind, soul, Deity. If these were ever *in sensu*, it can only have been *in sensu commune*: for of any one of the *five* senses they never were the objects.

[1] "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh." —*Rom.* vi. 19. That is, on account of the weakness of your understanding in spiritual matters.

[2] In the Church of *Santa Croce*, Florence, commenced A.D. 1294, are several paintings by Cimabue and Giotto, which Dante must have seen. In the Church of *Santa Maria Novella*, built still earlier, is the celebrated picture by Cimabue of the Virgin seated on a throne, with the Infant Saviour on her lap, larger than life, upon a gold ground, with six angels around. While the painter was employed upon it, Charles of Anjou passed through Florence, and was taken to see it. When completed, it was carried from Cimabue's house to the church in triumphal procession.—MURRAY'S *Handbook of Northern Italy*, p. 482-3.

[3] *Tobit* iii. 17, v. 4.

"Raphael the sociable spirit, that deign'd
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seven-times wedded maid."
Par. Lost, v. 223.

[4] "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,

Given to a form by Nature from afar.
But he perhaps the sentiment intended
Other than sound the words, and so conceals
A sense to be from ridicule defended.[1]
If he intends ascribing to these wheels
The honour of their influence, and the blame,
With a true aim, perhaps, a shaft he deals.
This truth ill-taught, of old the source became,
Of wrong to almost all the world, whence Jove,
And Mars, and Mercury, they dared to name.[2]

Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar."—WORDSWORTH.

To account for the origin and present condition of human souls, Plato supposed that when God formed the universe, he separated from the rest of the world inferior souls, equal in number to the stars, and assigned to each its proper celestial abode; but that these souls (by what means or for what reason, does not appear) were sent down into human bodies on earth, as into a sepulchre or prison. He ascribes to this cause the depravity and misery to which human nature is liable, and maintains that it is only by disengaging itself from animal passions, and rising above sensible objects to the contemplation of eternal things, that the soul can be prepared to return to its original habitation.—ENFIELD's *Hist. Phil.* p. 134.

[1] It has been supposed that Plato concealed under the literal sense an *esoteric* one, only known to the initiated few: but what that doctrine was, interpreters are not agreed. In the present passage, Dante supposes it to have been the influence of the stars on human actions. Bishop Stillingfleet thought "that Plato knew more of the lapse of mankind than he would openly discover, and therefore disguised it after his usual manner, in that hypothesis of pre-existence."—*Origines Sacræ*, b. iii, c. 2, § 15.

[2] The Stoics regarded the stars as fiery bodies, endued with perception and intelligence, animated, and therefore to be ranked among the gods,—prescient of the future, and accustomed to

That other doubt, which doth within thee move,
Has less of venom,[1] since its fallacy
Cannot induce thee far from me to rove.
Our justice, if unjust it seems to be
In mortal eyes, is yet an argument
For Faith, not heretic depravity.
But since with ease your mind intelligent
Can pierce this truth, no proof shall be refused
Which thou canst wish, to make it evident.[2]
If he who suffers, to the violence used
Yields no consent, by tyrant force unblench'd;
These souls could not on this ground be excused.
For will, if it comply not, is unquench'd,
Returning still, as flames toward heaven ascend,
Although a thousand times by violence wrench'd:
To force the least consent will sanction lend;
Such fault was theirs, when power they did acquire,
Back to the hallow'd place their way to wend.
But if their will had really been entire,
As Lawrence[3] held his, on the gridiron broil'd,

declare by signs to mankind the decrees of fate.—ENFIELD, *Hist. Phil.* 194, 195. The present names of the planets are a relic of this doctrine.

[1] Is less contrary to the true doctrine taught by Beatrice, as the first was said (line 27) to have more gall or venom, as being more opposed thereto.

[2] "If it were above your capacity, I would merely exhort you to believe; but as it is not, I shall demonstrate it by reason.

[3] The legend of St. Laurence relates, that when the Prefect of Rome, during the persecution under Valerian, demanded of him to surrender the treasures of the church, he promised compliance, and at the appointed time showed him the poor of the church, whom he had collected for that purpose; and, addressing the

And Mutius[1] with his hand thrust in the fire,
They from that pathway would not have recoil'd
Whence they were drawn, when to return made free;
But such firm will is rarely found unspoil'd.
And by these words, if heeded carefully
As they deserve, quash'd is the argument
Which oftentimes might have embarrass'd thee.
But see another pass itself present
To thwart thee now, such that thou couldst alone[2]
From thence not issue, ere thy strength be spent.
I, as a certainty, to thee have shown
That a blest spirit cannot lie; so near
Truth's primal source, it must be always known.

magistrate, said, "Here is the heavenly treasure in earthen vessels; these are the Church's wealth and the jewels of Christ's crown." Enraged by the disappointment the Prefect ordered the Saint to be placed on a gridiron over a slow fire. The martyr endured his torment with great calmness; and having for some time lain on one side, he said with a smiling countenance to the judge, "Let me be now turned, for one side is broiled enough." He continued praying for the conversion of Rome till he expired; Aug. 12th, A.D. 258.—A. BUTLER'S *Lives of Saints*.

[1] When Porsenna, king of Etruria, was besieging Rome, to restore Tarquin and royalty, Mucius, or Mutius, having penetrated to his tent for the purpose of killing him, stabbed the secretary by mistake instead. When bound and brought before the king, and asked the reason of his conduct, he replied, "I am a Roman citizen, and made war on the enemies of my country." He then laid his hand on a blazing altar; and, looking sternly at the king said, "I am only the first of 300 young Romans who have sworn to destroy you, or perish in the attempt." Porsenna, struck with his courage and patriotism, released him and made peace with the Romans.

[2] She speaks figuratively of another difficulty, which Dante could not clear up without her help.

Yet from Piccarda lately thou didst hear,
That Constance for the veil her love retain'd,
So that she seems to contradict me here.
Full often, brother, men by fear constrain'd,
In peril have done that reluctantly,
From which 'twas fit that they should have abstain'd:
As when Alcmæon, for the prayer which he,
Urged by his Sire, heard, his own mother slew,[1]
Grown impious to preserve his piety.[2]
Here I would have thee heed, that what men do,
When force is join'd with a consenting will,
As faults which cannot be excused we view.
Will absolute consents not to the ill;
But so far it consents as fear may wake
Of falling into mischief greater still.
Thus of a will resolved Piccarda spake,
And, I of that which yielding turns aside;[3]
So that our statements true agreement make."
Such was the billowing of that holy tide
Issuing whence truth has her sole fountain-head,
And both my eager doubts it pacified.
"O favorite of the Primal Love," I said,
"O goddess whose warm life-inspiring word
Hath so abundantly on me been shed,

[1] See *Purgatorio*, xii. 51 and note.

[2] "And in avenging one parent on the other,
By the same act he will be both pious and wicked."
OVID, *Metam.* ix. 407-8.

[3] Piccarda meant a will which retained its purpose, but was prevented by unavoidable circumstances from fulfilling it. Dante intended one which so vacillated as to fail in the performance, when opportunity was at length afforded. See line 80.

Affection's utmost depth will not afford
Enough to recompense thee grace for grace.[1]
But may the all-seeing Power be thy reward.
I know that till illumined by His rays
Who is the Truth, our mind can never rest,
Beyond whose presence no truth ever strays.
There rests she, like an eagle in her nest,
When she has reach'd it; and she can; else vain
Were each desire within the human breast.
Hence at Truth's foot may Doubt her birth obtain,
Sprout like, while Nature spurs us to secure
Steep after steep till we the summit gain.
This, this invites and doth my mind assure;
With reverence, lady, I to you apply,
One other truth to show, which is obscure.
I fain would learn if man can satisfy
For broken vows, by aught else good, which may
Not weigh less in your balances, on high."[2]
On me glanced Beatrice, whose eyes display
Sparkles of love; such looks divine she sent
That my o'ermaster'd vigour turn'd away,[3]
And, almost gone, mine eyes I downward bent.

[1] "I cannot thank thee sufficiently for this kindness." The expression "grace for grace" is taken from *John* i. 16.

[2] "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." —*Dan.* v. 27.

[3] See *Purgatorio*, xxiv. 142-4.

CANTO V.

THE ARGUMENT.

Beatrice by her graceful answer, solves the doubt of Dante before-mentioned. They ascend to the second heaven—the *Sphere of Mercury*, appropriated to those who, having been diligent in the pursuit of honour, have obtained the meed of high renown.

"If I upon thee shine with Love's warm light,[1]
In measure such as that of earth exceeds,
So that I overcome thy power of sight,
Think it not wonderful; for this proceeds
From perfect vision which, whene'er we prove,
Thus nearer to the goal our footstep speeds.[2]
I clearly see already from above
The light eternal shining in thy mind,
Which once beheld for ever kindles love.
And if aught else to lure thy love thou find,
'Tis but some vestige of the light which thou
Here seest, ill understood, which hence hath shined.[3]

[1] Beatrice informs Dante that the surpassing brightness of her appearance, which had overpowered his vision, was occasioned by their nearer approach to the Divine Presence.

[2] "Which, as it more vividly apprehends the Supreme Good, is borne towards it with greater strength of affection and desire."

[3] "It should be known that the Primal Agent, that is, God, paints his excellence on some things with a direct ray, and on others by a reflected splendour. Hence divine light shines in the intelligences immediately, and from thence it is reflected upon other things."—*Convito.*

Thou ask'st if quittance of a broken vow
By other service may be made, which can
Safety from wrath divine the soul allow."
'Twas thus this Canto Beatrice began,
And then, like one whose talk no respite knows,
Continuing, thus her holy sayings ran.
"The gift which from our Maker's bounty flows,
Most precious, most resembling his own good,
And that for which the most regard he shows,
Is liberty of will, a gift bestow'd
On creatures who possess intelligence,
For they, and only they are so endow'd.[1]
Now mayst thou certainly conclude from hence,
When in such manner men their vows contract
That God consents, how great their excellence.
For man in confirmation of the pact
Offers this treasure up in sacrifice,
As I describe it, and by his own act.
What compensation then canst thou devise?
If the good use thou plead'st, of what was offer'd,
Thou for good deeds from theft wouldst gain supplies.[2]
On the main point now certainty is proffer'd;

[1] Boethius asks, "In the succession of causes thus fixed, is there no liberty of our will?" To which question he represents Philosophy as replying, "Yes; for there would be no rational nature, if there were no liberty of the will." Beings endowed with intelligence and free will, are capable of happiness much higher in its kind and degree, than can ever be attained by animals possessing senses and instinct without moral freedom.

[2] "Although a thief should, out of that which he hath stolen, give help to a poor man, yet that is not to be called almsgiving."—DANTE, *De Monarchiâ*, ii. Dante does not at all agree with the ancient and popular estimate of Robin-Hood-robberies.

But holy Church seems by her dispensation
To contradict what I've to thee discover'd:
Sit then at table in deliberation
A little longer, since this rigid food
Claims aid for thy digestive meditation.
Expand thy mind, and oft be that review'd
Which I unfold; for not retain'd, in fact,
Mere hearing makes not science understood.
Two things concur to constitute this act
Of sacrifice—the subject and the vow,—
The thing surrender'd and the solemn pact.
This last will never a discharge allow,
Unless perform'd; and therefore 'twas that so
Precisely I discoursed thereon just now.
Hence of the Hebrews 'twas required, that though[1]
The offering sometimes might be changed, yet one
To offer they were bound, as thou shouldst know.
The other, as the subject matter known,
May be aught else, nor be less apposite,
If with material different from its own,
But none to shift the burden has a right
From his own back at will, without the turn
Of the two keys, the yellow and the white.[2]
That every change is worthless, thou shouldst learn,
If what's withheld thou in its substitute,
Like four in six, contain'd canst not discern.[3]

[1] *Leviticus*, xxvii.

[2] *Purg.* ix. 116—120. He is not to be judge in his own case, being liable to err through a natural bias; but he must consult his spiritual guides and be determined by their authority.

[3] No change must be made unless the thing substituted be of greater value than that which had been vowed.

Hence, if thou seek the value to compute
Of aught which weigh'd makes every scale depress'd,
None can for that with other cost commute.
Let mortals on them take no vows in jest;
Be true, not blindly rash like Jephthah, led
To offer what first met him, when he best
Had mourn'd his evil vow than done instead
Far worse by its fulfilment. Equal folly[1]
Did the great leader of the Greeks, when shed
His Iphigenia[2] tears of melancholy
For her fair face; while mourn both gay and grave
Who hear her tale, a deed so grimly holy.

[1] *Judges*, xi. 29—40.

[2] "Agamemnon had vowed to sacrifice to Diana the most beautiful object that should be born that year in his kingdom. Accordingly he sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia, because in that year nothing had been born which exceeded her in beauty. A vow which he should rather not have performed than commit so cruel an action."—Cic. *De Officiis*, iii. 25.

Euripides relates that Agamemnon having neglected to fulfil his vow, the Grecian army on their way to Troy, when their fleet was detained by contrary winds in the Bay of Aulis, compelled him to send for his daughter for the purpose of completing the sacrifice; as the Seer Chalcas declared that the only means of propitiating Diana and obtaining a favorable breeze. When the fatal blow was about to be struck, Iphigenia suddenly disappeared, and a stag was found substituted for her as a victim. The goddess had conveyed her to her temple in Tauris, where she became priestess, and was afterwards instrumental in saving the lives of her brother Orestes and his friend Pylades.—See *Purg.* xiii. 33, Note. *Iphigenia in Aulis.*

As Homer makes no mention of this incident, it is probably the addition of a subsequent age; perhaps borrowed in part from some report of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac, and, as the name *Iphigenia* implies, from the story of *Jephthah's Daughter.*

Christians, do you more soberly behave,
Not like a feather to each blast consent,
Nor think in every stream yourselves to lave.[1]
You have the Old and the New Testament,
The Shepherd of the Church too for your guide,
These, to preserve you, ample means present.
If evil avarice preach you aught beside,
Show you are men, and not insensate cattle,
Nor give the Jew occasion to deride.[2]
Trifle not like the lamb in bleating prattle,
Quitting her mother's milk in playful glee,
That with herself she may make sportive battle."[3]
Thus, as I write, spake Beatrice to me;
Then turn'd her face all eager to explore
That clime where nature glows most livingly.[4]
Her silence and the alter'd look she wore,
Struck dumb the wish I felt for more discourse,
So eager for new questions just before.
And as an arrow sent with matchless force,
Ere the string rest will reach its destined aim,
So to the second realm we urged our course.[5]
With joy so radiant saw I my fair dame
When enter'd in the splendour of that heaven,

[1] See 2 *Kings*, v. 12.

[2] The tale of Giannotto di Civigni and the Jew Abraham, in the *Decameron*, is illustrative of this caution. Giornata I. Nov. ii.

[3] Leaving her dam and leaping about in her transports of delight, until she falls into some mischief.

[4] "I say again, that the nearer heaven is to the equinoctial circle, the more light it has in proportion; and therefore it has the more motion, the more life, the more beauty, and consequently the more excellence."—DANTE, *Convito*, p. 48.

[5] The planet Mercury.

That brighter still the planet thence became.
And if it did with smiles the star enliven,
What must it me, to whom a changeful mood
On all occasions was by nature given!
As in a fish-pond calm and clear the brood
Of fishes dart on aught which so is thrown
That it may seem to them their proper food,
So saw I of celestial splendours drawn
More than a thousand towards us and each cried,
"To share our love see one more hither flown!"
And every shade, as towards us now he hied,
Appear'd to overflow with so much joy
That by new splendour he was glorified.
Think, reader, how thy pleasure 'twould alloy,
If what is here begun aside were laid;
What craving to know more would thee annoy:
Hence thine, to judge of my desire, will aid,
That they to me their story would recite,
Soon as they were before mine eyes display'd.
"O blithely born, whom Grace has to the sight
Of its enthroned eternal triumph led
Before abandoning the field of fight;[1]
We by the light which through all heaven is spread
Are kindled up, and if thy wish it be
To know more of us, be it fully fed."
One of those loving spirits thus to me
Said; and then Beatrice cried, "Speak, speak thou;
Trust them as gods in full security."
"I plainly see thee, as residing now

[1] "O happy man, to whom Divine Grace has given the sight of those throned powers in their eternal triumph, ere thou hast finally quitted the Church Militant on earth!"

In thy own light,[1] which when thou smilest plays
In gentle corruscations from thy brow.
But who thou art I know not, nor what stays
Thy footsteps, worthy spirit in the sphere
Which is to mortals veil'd by other rays."[2]
So spake I, looking towards the lustre near,
Which had address'd me; which more than at first
With overwhelming brightness did appear;
Even as the sun self-hidden, when immersed
In light excessive, and his burning pride
The thick and chilling vapours has dispersed.
So through more joy in its own rays did hide,
That holy form, nor sight thereof was granted;
Which, thus wrapt closely up, to me replied,
What will be in the following canto chanted.

[1] "She moved in light of her own making."—MOORE.

[2] The planet Mercury, being nearest the Sun, is frequently concealed from our sight by his beams.

As the preceding canto treats of Monastic vows, the following remarks may not be thought inappropriate.

Since, according to the Sacred Scriptures, Marriage is an ordinance of Heaven, and "honourable in all;" while the Church of Rome regards it even as a Sacrament; it is difficult to see how it can be inconsistent with Vows of Chastity. The law and practice of clerical celibacy have inflicted incalculable suffering, and produced an enormous amount of immorality. In proof of the latter, amongst other evidence, we refer to the *Centum Gravamina*, or Hundred Grievances, so famous in the German annals, presented to Pope Adrian VI. A.D. 1524.

Very recently there has appeared in Florence a book, which has reached its fourth edition, entitled "The Mysteries of Neapolitan Cloister Life, being Memoirs of Henrietta Caracciolo, of the

family of the Princes of Formo." Its success is almost unparalleled in Italy. The cause of that fervour with which these *Mysteries* have been received by the Italian public, is the seal of truth set upon them by the absence of all mystery with respect to the authoress. Her family is one of the noblest and most ancient in Southern Italy, her antecedents and those of her parents are well known to a great part of her readers; and no shadow of doubt exists as to the truth of the main facts of her sorrowful story. Had it been known to Dante, we do not think that he would have condemned her abandonment of Cloister Life, and we do not know in what part of his Inferno he would have made room for her persecutor, the Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Riario Sforza. Very curious and instructive are the minute details given by Signora Caracciolo, as to the course of dissimulation, petty malice, and intrigue, pursued by that prelate, even to the intercepting her letters to the Pope, to keep her in his power. She did at last outwit him, and escape from his clutches, to make known to the world the secrets of her prison-house. When Garibaldi entered Naples in triumph, Sept. 7, 1860, she laid down for ever her black veil on the altar of that church, where she had received it nearly twenty years before. Later still, she received the heroic Dictator's formal authorisation to return to the world and its ties—though such a sanction, of course, weighs less than nothing in the scales of ecclesiastical authority,—and she has married and settled in Naples, where she still lives.—See *Athenæum*.

The law of Clerical Celibacy, under the pretence of superior holiness, was first imposed on the heads of the Church to prevent the great ecclesiastical fiefs from becoming hereditary. But when extended by Hildebrand (Gregory VII) to the inferior clergy, it produced the most deplorable results. The reëstablishment, by the Reformation in the sixteenth century, of clerical marriage as a right, was not only a triumph of good sense and human nature over superstition and papal policy and tyranny, but also a homage to the moral law, and an assertion of Marriage-sanctity. The Monastic institution, which had been introduced when the church entered on the ages of slavery and error, was destined to fall at the second dawn of liberty and truth.

CANTO VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Spirit, who in the preceding Canto had offered to satisfy Dante's inquiries, now makes himself known to the poet as the Emperor Justinian. He describes his reform of the laws, and the victories achieved under the Eagle-standard of Rome, giving a brief epitome of Roman history. He informs him that the sphere in which they were, was appropriated to those who on earth had sought fame by doing good; and intimates the presence of the pilgrim-poet Romeo, who had experienced the most ungrateful return for the services he had rendered his master.

"When Constantine the eagle had constrain'd
Back to return, against the heavenly road
Held by that ancient who Lavinia gain'd,[1]
Two hundred years and more the Bird of God,[2]
Nigh to those mountains whence it first ascended,

[1] Justinian here says, that Constantine removed the seat of empire to Byzantium, in a direction opposite to that which Æneas took from Troy to Italy.

[2] The Eagle, the well known standard of the Roman people and empire.—See *Purgatorio*, x. 80, 81 and note.

"Upon the sceptre of Jupiter the Eagle slumbers."—PINDAR, *Pyth.* Carm. i.

"Ye have seen how I bare you on Eagle's wings."—*Exod.* xix. 4.

Constantine removed to Byzantium, A. D. 324, and Justinian's reign commenced in 527.

On Europe's verge extreme held its abode.[1]
And by the shade of sacred wings defended,
Govern'd the world, pass'd on from hand to hand,
And changing thus, to mine at length descended.
Cæsar I was, I am Justinian, and
Through Him whose love is with my being blent,
Brought law's excess within the bounds I plann'd.[2]
And I, ere to this work my thoughts I bent
Believed there was one nature, and not more,[3]
In Christ, and with such faith was then content.
But blessèd Agapetus,[4] he who bore
Sway as chief pastor, to the faith sincere
By his persuasive reasoning brought me o'er.[5]

[1] The mountains which skirt the plain of Troy, the most conspicuous of which is Mount Ida.

[2] See *Purgatorio*, vi. 88, 89, and note.

The emperor Justinian is made by Dante the type of just and correct law, so essential to the highest welfare of a nation. Others give a very different view of his character. See *The Roman and the Teuton*, by C. Kingsley, M. A., p. 146—154.

[3] This was the heresy of the Monophysites or Eutychians, which commenced in the fifth century from Eutyches, an abbot at Constantinople. It was condemned by the fourth general Council at Chalcedon, A. D. 451.—MOSHEIM, *Ecc. Hist.* Cent. v. part ii. ch. 5. The error had arisen from what Theologians call a "confusion of the two natures," the human and divine, in the person of Jesus Christ.

[4] Agapetus, Bishop of Rome, whose *Schedia Regia*, addressed to the Emperor Justinian, procured him a place among the wisest and most judicious writers of the sixth century.—*Ibid.*

[5] A controversy had arisen on the question, "Whether one of the Persons of the Trinity suffered?" John II. who became Bishop of Rome, A. D. 532, published a decree in the affirmative, "because Jesus Christ, one of the Persons of the Trinity, suffered in the flesh." John II. was succeeded by Agapetus, to whom

Him I believed; and now to me as clear
Seems what he said, as false and true to thee
In each opposing statement will appear;[1]
As soon as with the Church my steps agree,
Through inspiration of the grace Divine,
To my high task I went right earnestly.
My arms to Belisarius I consign,[2]
Conjoin'd with whom was heaven's right hand so nigh,
It plainly proved the works of peace were mine.
To thy first question thus I've made reply,[3]
Which here had ended, but its nature shows

Justinian wrote, and Agapetus both replied and sent legates into the East. He afterwards visited the Emperor, who at his instance removed Anthiminius from the See of Constantinople, for his opposition to the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon.—Du Pin's *Church History*, Cent. vi. ch. 3.

[1] Since of two contradictory propositions, if one is true the other must be false.

[2] He was an Illyrian, of humble birth, and became the greatest general of Justinian. In A.D. 534, he overthrew the Vandal kingdom of Africa, which had been established about 100 years before by Genseric, and took prisoner the Vandal king Gelimer, whom he led in triumph to Constantinople. In 535—540, he warred against the Goths in Italy, and conquered Sicily, but was recalled by the jealousy of Justinian. In 541-4, he again fought the Goths in Italy, and was again recalled by Justinian, leaving his victories to be completed by his rival Narses in the total subversion of the Gothic kingdom, and the establishment of the exarchate of Ravenna. The last victory of Belisarius was in 559, when he defeated the invading Bulgarians. In 563 he was accused of a conspiracy against the life of Justinian, and according to the most authentic account, imprisoned for a year in his own palace, and then restored to his honours. He died in 565.

[3] See Canto v. 127. The first question, "who and what he was?"

That I should some addition yet supply.
How little reason they have who oppose
The sacred symbol, that thou now mayst see,
Whether they call themselves its friends or foes,[1]
Behold what valour made it worthily
To be renown'd, commencing from the hour
When Pallas died to give it sovereignty.[2]
Thou knowest that three hundred years and more,
Its dwelling was in Alba, till the day[3]
When the three fought with other three of yore,[4]

[1] The Ghibelines made the imperial standard the ensign of their party, but often disgraced it; while the Guelfs were directly and avowedly opposed to it.

[2] A son of Evander, the Arcadian ally of Æneas. *Æneid.* viii. 104. He was killed in battle by Turnus king of the Rutuli—*Ib.* x. 439—487; on whom Æneas avenged his death.—*Ib.* xii. 940—952.

[3] Built by Ascanius, on the spot where Æneas found a *white* sow and her litter. It was called *Longa*, from its extending down the side of the mountain to the Alban Lake; probably on the site now partly occupied by the village and convent of Palazzulo. It was destroyed by Tullus Hostilius, B.C. 665, and its inhabitants were removed to Rome. Its name is supposed by some to be of Celtic origin, from Alp, on account of its elevation. Rome is said to have been a colony from Alba Longa.

[4] The three Roman brothers Horatii fought with the three Alban brothers Curatii, to determine whether the supremacy should be exercised by Rome or Alba. Two of the Horatii fell, and the Curatii were severely wounded. Seeing this, the surviving Horatius, yet unhurt, pretended to fly, and vanquished his opponents by encountering them severally. He returned to Rome in triumph, bearing his threefold spoils.

Dante gives here a rapid view of Roman history; the Sabine war and wedding, Lucretia's wrong, the Roman victories, the repulse of Brennus and of Pyrrhus.

Its deeds thou knowest, from the Sabine fray
To wrong'd Lucretia, while seven kings commanded,
The nations round subduing to its sway.
Thou knowest it was oft with wings expanded,
'Gainst Brennus, Pyrrhus, by famed Romans borne,
Against the other chiefs and nations banded.
Torquatus, Quintus[1]—with his locks unshorn,[2]
Whence named,—the Decii, Fabii,[3] did it guide

[1] Titus Manlius having slain in single combat a gigantic Gaul, and transferred to his own neck the collar (*torques*) of his fallen foe, was thence named Torquatus. He was dictator B.C. 353, and 349. He was consul in 347, 344, and 340. Before a great victory which he gained over the Latins, and while the hostile armies, though not yet engaged, were facing each other, he ordered that no soldier should quit the ranks, on pain of death. His own son, provoked by the taunting challenge of a Latin champion to engage in single combat, slew his opponent and brought the spoils to his father, who made him undergo capital punishment for his breach of discipline. But the Romans were shocked by such an action,

"To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father."

Their sentiment, and that of posterity, was expressed in the proverbial phrase *Manliana Superbia.*

[2] L. Quintus Cincinnatus (i. e. Curly-haired) was, B.C. 460, appointed Consul Subfectus. In 458, the army being in peril from the Æqui and the Volsci, he was called from the plough to the Dictatorship, when he defeated the enemy and saved the army. Having held supreme power fifteen days, he laid it down, and returned to the cultivation of his fields. In 439, at the age of eighty, he was again chosen Dictator, to oppose the alleged machinations of Sp. Mælius. After holding his office twenty-one days, he again laid it down and returned to his estate, refusing the splendid rewards offered him by the Senate.

[3] P. Decius Mus, B.C. 340, consul with T. Manlius Torquatus in the great Latin war. Devoting himself and the hostile army to destruction (*Diis manibus*), according to the prescribed for-

To fame, which to embalm I've not forborne,
It humbled to the dust the Arabian pride
Of those led on by Hannibal, who pass'd[1]
The Alpine rocks, from whence thou Po dost glide.
Beneath it, even when yet with young men class'd,
Scipio and Pompey triumph'd; to the hill[2]
'Twas ruthless, under which thou native wast,
Then as the time drew nigh, serenely still,
Design'd by heaven the world from strife to save,
Cæsar obtain'd it by the Roman will.
And what it did from Var to Rhine's bright wave,
Isere and Aär saw, and saw the Seine,
And every valley which Rhone's fountains lave.

mula, he rushed into the thickest of the enemy and was slain, leaving the victory to the Romans. His son, four times Consul, B.C. 312, 308, 297, and 295, in the war with the Gauls, imitated the self-sacrifice of his father for his country's welfare. The grandson was Consul in 279, in the war against Pyrrhus. The Fabii were a noble family who, B.C. 477, undertook a war against the Vientes. In a battle near Cremera, 306 of them were slain. The only survivor of the family, who on account of his youth had remained at Rome, was the ancestor of the Fabii renowned in succeeding ages, three brothers of whom were Consuls in seven successive years, from B.C. 485 to 479.

[1] This greatest general of antiquity, passed the Alps into Italy B.C. 218, probably by the pass of the Little St. Bernard. It was in the beginning of October, when the snows have usually commenced in the high Alps. They had previously been deemed impassable by a great army. On hearing of this unexampled invasion, P. Corn. Scipio hastened into Cisalpine Gaul (now Northern Italy) and took the command against him.

[2] It was the head quarters of Catiline's army, on which account it was taken and burnt by the Romans. For its subsequent history, see *Inferno*, xv. 62, note. The remains of the ancient walls, of a theatre, &c., are still to be seen.

Its deeds, forth issuing from Ravenna, when
It leap'd the Rubicon, such flight sustain,
They cannot be pursued by tongue or pen.
Its cohorts it conducted back to Spain,
Then towards Durazzo[1] and Pharsalia smote,
So that warm Nile was conscious of the pain.[2]
Antandro, Simoïs, again it sought,
The region whence it came, and Hector's grave.
Then ill to Ptolemy its pinions brought,[3]
On Juba next it thundering fell; then wave[4]
Its rapid wings returning to your West,
Where the Pompeian trump its war-blast gave.[5]

[1] Dyracchium, the head quarters of Pompey's army in the civil war, and the place where all his military stores were kept.

[2] After Pompey's defeat at Pharsalia, he sailed to Egypt, and was about to land at Pelusium, where Ptolemy, whose father he had restored to the kingdom, stood on the shore as if waiting to receive him. But from a base fear of offending the conqueror, his death had been predetermined, and just as he rose to leave the boat, he was stabbed in the back by a servant of Ptolemy.

[3] The twelfth Ptolemy, whose ungrateful, cowardly, and treacherous acquiescence in the murder of Pompey was speedily avenged. In the Alexandrian war, in which he took part against Cæsar, he was defeated, and in attempting to escape was drowned.

[4] King of Numidia. Taking part against Cæsar, Juba was by him defeated in the decisive battle of Thapsus; after which he wandered about for some time, and at length fell by his own hand.

[5] Cneius and Sextus, the sons of Pompey, who commanded a powerful army at the time of their father's death, prepared to resist the conqueror, but were pursued by Cæsar with his usual vigour and rapidity, and defeated at Manda, in the south of Spain, where the elder brother was killed. Sextus was afterwards defeated in a naval engagement on the north coast of Sicily, by Octavius and Lepidus, and sailing into Asia, he was there put to death by Antony, B.C. 35.

Brutus' and Cassius' bark in hell may best[1]
Vouch what by its next bearer was achieved,
And Modena's,[2] Perugia's[3] woes attest.
Sad Cleopatra[4] for it still is grieved,
Who flying to avoid it, from the asp
The black envenom'd sudden death received.
With him the Red Sea coast its talons grasp,
With him such peace it through the world produc'd,
That Janus closed his gates with bar and hasp,[5]
But of that sign, by me thus introduced,
The past exploits, and those not then mature
By which the world was to its sway reduced,

[1] Defeated in the battle near Philippi by Octavius, B.C. 42.

[2] Anciently *Mutina*. After Cæsar's death, Decimus Brutus was besieged here by Mark Antony, from December, B.C. 44, to April, 43; and, in the battle fought under its walls, the consuls Hirtus and Pansa were slain.

[3] In *Perusia*, now Perugia, L. Antonius, brother to Mark Antony, when unable to keep the field against Octavius, took refuge and was besieged from the end of B.C. 41 to the spring of 40. Famine compelled a surrender; but one of the citizens having set fire to his house, a conflagration took place which burnt the whole city to the ground.

[4] The luxurious queen of Egypt; see *Inferno*, v. 63; the paramour first of Cæsar and then of Antony; after her flight from Actium, to avoid being led in triumph by Octavius she procured her own death, by means of two asps conveyed to her in a basket and concealed among leaves and fruit.

[5] Octavius, after the defeat of Antony and consequent submission of Egypt, having now become the undisputed master of the Roman world, assumed the title of Augustus. On three occasions during his long and prosperous reign, the temple of Janus in Rome was closed in token of universal peace. The third time was just before the birth of our Saviour. See *Purg.* xxii. 70—73 and note.

Grew in appearance trifling and obscure,
If when held by the third Imperial sire,[1]
View'd with clear eye and with affection pure,
The living Justice which doth me inspire
Conceded to his hand of whom I spake,
Glory to take the vengeance of his ire.
Well may my answer here thy wonder wake;
When for that vengeance on the ancient sin,
Vengeance with Titus, it made haste to take;[2]
And when the Lombard's tooth, sharp set therein,
Had bit the Holy Church, beneath its wings,
Did Charlemagne to aid her, victory win.[3]
Now canst thou judge of those my statement brings
Before thee as accused, and of their faults,
Who are the cause whence all your evil springs.

[1] It was in the reign of Tiberius, and under his government, though not with his personal cognisance, that Christ was crucified.—See *Exod.* ix. 16; *Acts* iv. 27, 28.

[2] When Christ was crucified, and thus "expiated the sin of the world," *John* i. 29, the Jews who shared in his murder imprecated his blood on themselves and on their children.—*Matt.* xxvii. 25. Accordingly, in the course of Divine Providence, it was avenged by Titus in the taking and destruction of their city and temple.—1 *Thess.* ii, 15, 16, and JOSEPHUS, *Wars of the Jews.*

[3] On three several occasions did the kings of France, Pepin and his son Charlemagne, pass the Alps to defend the Roman See against the aggressions of the Lombards. On the last of these occasions, A.D. 774, when Charlemagne defeated Desiderius their king, who had besieged Rome, he put an end to the kingdom of the Lombards, after it had subsisted 200 years; and not only confirmed the grants of territory made by his father to the Roman Pontiffs, but added others not included in the grant of Pepin.—MOSHEIM, *Ecc. Hist.* Cent. viii., pt. ii., ch. ii.

Under the lilies[1] one that sign assaults,
  Another claims it for a faction's part,
  And hence 'tis hard to see whose truth most halts.
The Ghibelines should raise, to ply their art,
  Some other ensign, since all ills betide
  That follower who therefrom will justice part.[2]
Let not this modern Charles, with Guelfs allied,[3]
  Now lower it, but at those talons quake
  Which have stripp'd off a nobler lion's hide.
Oft have the father's faults been seen to make
  The children weep: nor let him think that God
  Will change his arms and Charles's lilies take.[4]
This little star is the assign'd abode[5]
  Of spirits good, who active were that fame

[1] Blazoned on the Royal Standard of France.

[2] Dante belonged to the Bianchi party of the Guelfs, who sympathised with the Ghibelines in their attachment to the Imperial cause; but he here censures the conduct both of Guelfs and Ghibelines.

[3] Some suppose that Charles of Valois, son of Philip III. of France is here referred to, whom Boniface VIII. had about this time invited into Italy, with the promise of his being made emperor.—See *Inferno*, vi. 69; *Purg.*, xx. 71, and notes. Others apply the passage to Charles II. of Naples, who succeeded his father Charles of Anjou in that kingdom.—*Purg.* vii. 124; xx. 79, and notes.

[4] Let him not suppose that God will transfer the empire of the world from Rome to France; and let him reflect, that for the crimes of his predecessors he may have to pay the penalty, since (especially in national affairs) God "visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him."—*Exod.* xx. 5.

[5] Here commences Justinian's answer to Dante's second question, Canto v. 127, &c. "What prevented his informant's further ascent?"

And honour might be on their names bestow'd.
And to that goal when our affections aim,
So straying, it must needs be that the rays
Of love divine will mount with duller flame.
But in comparing how our guerdon pays
Our merit, lies a part of our delight,
Since neither less nor more we see it weighs.
The living justice tempers thus the flight
Of our affection, so that it can be
Never to evil twisted from the right.
From differing voices dulcet sounds agree,
So in our life, the differing seats combined,
Among these orbs make sweetest harmony.
And here within this pearly star enshrined
The light of Romeo[1] shines, whose great and fair

[1] According to G. Villani (vi. 90), at a time when the revenues of Raymond Berenger were in a state of disorder, a pilgrim named Romeo, who had visited the shrine of St. James of Compostella, arrived at his court; and having by his discreet behaviour gained Raymond's confidence, was consulted by him on the state of his affairs. He proved so efficient a finance minister, that he completely relieved the count from his embarrassments; and so able a negotiator, that he got the count's four daughters married to as many sovereign princes. The dowry which he enabled the count to raise for Margaret the eldest, and her consequent marriage with the king of France, could not fail to facilitate the marriage of her sisters, as he had calculated and predicted.

The jealousy of the Provençal nobles induced them to accuse him to Raymond of having appropriated the public treasure to his own use, in consequence of which an account of his administration was demanded; which when he had rendered, Romeo said, "Count, I have served you long and faithfully, and have greatly augmented your small revenue. You have listened to evil counsel, and been wanting in gratitude towards me. I came to your court a poor man, and have lived honestly with you. Return me

Achievement such ill recompense could find.
But the Provençals who his rivals were
Have little cause to laugh; ill course, I ween,
Is his who when well served finds mischief there.
Four daughters, each of whom became a queen,
Had Raymond Berenger;[1] this Romeo then
Did for him, though a humble pilgrim seen.
Of this just man the words of envious men
Moved him at length strict reckoning to demand,
Which he presented rendering twelve for ten.
Then old and poor he thence departed; and
If the world only knew the heart he bore,
His life by morsels gain'd with suppliant hand,
Much as it praises him 'twould praise him more."

the little mule, the staff, and the scrip which I brought hither with me, and never more expect any service from me." Convinced of the justice of this reproach, Raymond begged that the past might be forgotten, and that he would lay aside his intention of quitting the court. But his honest indignation was too great to brook such treatment, and he departed a pilgrim as he came, and was heard of there no more.

Such is the Italian account, to which Dante refers. The French assert that he continued in his office at the Court of Provence, even after the death of Raymond.

[1] Raimondo Berlinghieri, or Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence and Folcachiero, son of Ildefonso, King of Aragon, was a good Provençal poet, a lover of learned men, liberal, and so fortunate, that having married Beatrice, daughter of Thomas, Count of Savoy, a very excellent and accomplished princess, he had by her four daughters, beautiful, wise, and virtuous, who were, as we have seen, married to four kings; namely, Margaret to St. Louis of France, Eleanor to Henry III. of England, Sanchia to Richard King of the Romans and Earl of Cornwall, and Beatrice to Charles of Anjou, King of Naples and Sicily.

CANTO VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Justinian, after chanting the *Sanctus*, disappears with the other shades, his companions. New doubts which had arisen in the mind of the poet are solved by Beatrice, who discourses on Free-will, the Fall of Man, the Incarnation of Christ, the Atonement, the Sublimity of Redemption, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Final Resurrection.

"HOSANNA! Sanctus Deus! Lord of hosts!
By thy effulgence making yet more bright
The raptured ardours of these heavenly coasts!"[1]
Thus chanting, while on him I fix'd my sight,
To his own circle turn'd that form, while shone[2]
O'er his whole aspect thrown, redoubled light.
And he and they in circling dance moved on,
And then from me, like swiftest sparks, away,
Veil'd by the sudden distance, they were gone.
Doubtful, I said within, or wish'd to say,
"Speak, speak, O speak!" addressing thus my lady,
That her sweet words might now my thirst allay.

[1] Justinian's address to Dante, which occupies the whole of the preceding canto, here concludes with a hymn in Latin and Hebrew. *Hosanna*, "Save now," or "Save, I pray;" *Sabaoth*, "hosts," or "armies;" *Mahaloth*, "Kingdoms."

[2] In allusion to the circular motion of the heavenly bodies, over which these "happy fires," or "intellectual ardours" are supposed by Dante to preside.

But that great reverence which is always ready
To quell me wholly with her very name,
Bow'd me like one whom slumber makes unsteady.
Not long was I thus left by that fair dame:
She said, while her sweet smile upon me shined,
Such as might gladden one though wrapt in flame,
"By evidence infallible I find[1]
That, how a just revenge can justly be
Punish'd, is what thou ponderest in thy mind;[2]
But from this doubt I'll quickly set thee free:
And thou attend to what my words retrace,
While the great sentence I explain to thee.
That curb which for his good Heaven chose to place
On his free-will, the man who lived unborn[3]
In dooming thus himself doom'd his whole race:
For which mankind, of strength and glory shorn,
Did many an age the depths of error prove,
Till God's own Word came down to us forlorn.
That nature which did from its source remove,
He chose with his own person to unite,
By the sole act of his eternal love.[4]
Thy fix'd attention let me now invite:
This nature with its Maker thus conjoin'd,
Had been by Him created pure and right.
But by itself that Paradise assign'd
It forfeited, because it went aside
From truth's plain way, and left its life behind.

[1] Because he saw it in the light of God, or by immediate revelation.—See Canto viii. 89.

[2] In allusion to Canto vi. lines 89, 93.

[3] Adam; who was created, not born.

[4] This refers to the miraculous conception of our Saviour by the blessed Virgin.

No juster punishment was e'er applied,[1]
  Than that which wrapp'd the cross in mortal gloom,
  If we the nature only scan that died:
But never was there so unjust a doom,
  If only we the suffering person view
  Who had vouchsafed that nature to assume.[2]
For from one act may different things ensue,
  And with one death God and the Jews were pleased:[3]
  For it earth trembled and heaven open'd too.[4]
Now let thy mind of anxious doubt be eased
  When for a righteous vengeance thou art told
  That a just court by vengeance is appeased.[5]
But now thy mind, by thought on thought controll'd,

[1] Regarding only the human nature of Christ, and considering him as the representative or federal head of the human race, his death was according to the strict demand of Divine Justice, as an expiation for human offence.—*Isaiah* liii. 5—12; *John* i. 29.

[2] Considering the personal innocence of Christ and the beneficence of his life and actions, never was punishment less deserved by any one on his own account than by him.—*Acts* iii. 14, 15.

[3] The death of Christ was pleasing to God, as a means of harmonising the exercise of mercy in the redemption of mankind with the requirements of Divine Justice.—*Hebrews* x. 5—10. It was pleasing to the unbelieving part of the Jewish nation, as a means of removing one whose claims and character as the predicted Messiah interfered with their cherished pride and prejudice, and disappointed their expectations of worldly grandeur.—*Acts* ii. 23; iv. 27, 28.

[4] *Matt.* xxvii. 50, 51. "Having freedom to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us," &c.—*Heb.* x. 20.

[5] The vengeance taken by Titus on the Jewish nation, as described by Josephus, was a signal instance of retributive Providence for the crucifixion of the Messiah. See *Purg.* xxi. 82, 84. The "just court" is that of Heaven.—*Psalm* xcvii. 2.

Doth in a tangled web to me appear,
Which thou wait'st eagerly to see unroll'd.
Thou sayst, 'I understand well what I hear;
But wherefore our redemption to procure
God will'd such means, to me seems far from clear.'
Brother, of this decree the sepulture
Is deep to eyes of those whose intellect
Hath in the flame of love not grown mature.
Yet since to this point men their thoughts direct
With prying look, which little yet discerns,
I'll tell thee why Heaven did this mode select.
Celestial Bounty, which all envy spurns,[1]
Eternal beauties without number shows,
While brightly sparkling in itself it burns.
Whatever from that Source directly flows
Is without end, for no mutation brings
Destruction to the impress He bestows.
Whate'er directly from that Bounty springs,
Is wholly free, since uncontroll'd by might
Of transient, new, and sublunary things.
Most like him, 'tis most pleasing in his sight:
For that pure flame which doth on all things shine,
Is, in what most resembles it, most bright.
All these advantages which I define
Mark Man's preëminence; but if one fail,[2]
He must from his nobility decline.
Sin only can disfranchisement entail,

[1] The All-sufficient must be incapable of envy, which is the vice of littleness, weakness and want. Celestial Bounty bestows without grudging.—*Matt.* vi. 45. *James* i. 5.

[2] Freewill, dominion over the inferior creatures, the moral image of God, the light of Divine truth in the soul, and immortality.

And he without God's likeness must remain,
When thus the light within him has grown pale:
Nor can fall'n man his dignity regain
Unless what sin hath ruin'd be redress'd,
And sinful pleasure paid with righteous pain.
When your whole nature in its germ transgress'd,[1]
Driven out from Paradise by flaming swords,
'Twas also of these glories dispossess'd.
Nor could recover them, if thou my words
Mark well, in any way which he could take,
Except by passing one of these two fords:[2]
Either that God, for his mere mercy's sake
Had pardon'd him, or, when he did amiss,
That Man himself should satisfaction make.
Within the Eternal Counsel's deep abyss,
Fix now thine eyes, far down as they can go,
With earnest heed, while I discourse of this.
Man could, within his limits fix'd below,
Never atone, for in obedience by[3]
Humility he could not stoop so low,
As in revolt his thoughts had mounted high.[4]
And this the reason was why Man could find
For his offence no means to satisfy.

[1] In saying, not "our," but "*your* nature," Beatrice claims an exemption which could not belong to the daughter of Portarini, and must therefore be regarded as a personification of Divine Science.

[2] By one of these two only practicable methods.

[3] In his merely human character he could not make atonement for his offences to Divine Justice.

[4] The twofold allusion is first to the Tempter's promise, "Ye shall be as Gods."—*Gen.* iii. 5; and secondly, to the condescension of Christ in assuming a mortal nature.—See *Phil.* ii. 6—8.

'Twas needful then that God should bring mankind
By his own ways back to the life sincere;
By one of these, I say, or both combined.
But since the work more pleasing seems and dear,
When of the Author's bounty it conveys
That proof which makes his heartfelt love appear,
He whose bright stamp the universe displays,—
The Sovereign Bounty,—in restoring Man,[1]
Chose therefore to proceed in both these ways.
Nor has there been by either, nor e'er can,
From Nature's birth till darkness hides her grave,
So lofty and magnificent a plan.
God seem'd more bounteous when himself he gave,
That Man might for his own relief avail,
Than had his mere decree sufficed to save.
And every other mode would wholly fail
For justice due, had not the Son of God
Humbled himself to wear a fleshly veil.
Now I resume a former episode:
In every point fulfilling thy desire,
That thou mayst see it, as to me 'tis show'd.
Thou sayst, 'I see the water, air, and fire,
And earth, and all the mixtures they endure,
Become corrupt, nor long remain entire;
And that they were created[2] we are sure.'
If then my speech and truth maintain consistence,
These from corruption should be quite secure.
The angels and this land of pure subsistence,[3]

[1] By the methods of Justice and Mercy united.

[2] Created by the immediate power of God.

[3] Here is Aristotle's doctrine of a First Matter, destitute of qualities, and therefore not body, but the subject on which forms

O brother, were created, we may say,
Even as they are, in their complete existence:
But all the elements named, and that array
Of substances which from them have been made,
By a created virtue form'd are they.
Created was the matter thus display'd;
Created was the informing virtue in
The stars thus wheeling round in light array'd.
The souls of brutes and of all plants begin
From rays and motions of those holy fires,[1] 140
Whence they their active powers and habits win.
Our life Supreme Beneficence inspires
Direct,[2] hence 'tis for Him with love inflamed,
So that thenceforth it ever Him desires.
A further inference may here be named,—
Your resurrection,—if by thee be weigh'd
How human flesh was by its Maker framed,
What time our primal parents first were made."[3]

might be impressed, and in which they inhere.—*Metaph.* i. 6; vii. 3. But while *he* regarded it as eternal and uncreated, our poet, in opposition to this "Master of Reason," asserts that matter was created, and that the informing virtue by which he supposes it to have been and still to be modified was created also. See *Purg.* xviii. 51, and note.

[1] "The beams of each heaven are the means by which their virtue descends to things below."—DANTE'S *Convito*, ii. 7. See Canto ii. 123, and note.

[2] This is true of the first man, but not of his posterity. See *Purg.* xvi. 85—89; xxv. 69—72, and note.

[3] "When man was not, what power, what causes made him to be? Whatever it was, it did then as great a work as to raise his body to the same being again. And because we know not the method of Nature's secret changes, and how we can be fashioned beneath '*in secreto terræ*,' must our ignorance be put in the balance against the

hopes of mankind, the faith of nations, and the truth of God? And are our opinions of the power of God so low that our understanding must be his measure, and he shall be confessed to do nothing, unless it be made plain in our philosophy? Certainly we have a low opinion of God, unless we believe he can do more things than we can understand. But let us hear St. Paul's demonstration; "If the corn dies and lives again, if it lays its body down, and suffers alteration, dissolution, and death,—but, at the Spring, rises again in the verdure of a leaf, in the fulness of the ear, in the kidneys of wheat; if it proceeds from little to great, from nakedness to ornament, from emptiness to plenty, from unity to multitude, from death to life; be a Sadducee no more; shame not thy understanding, and reproach not the weakness of thy faith, by thinking that corn can be restored to life, and that man cannot."—Dr. JEREMY TAYLOR, *Sermon on* 1 *Cor.* XV. 23.

CANTO VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Dante ascends with Beatrice to the third heaven in the planet *Venus, the Star of Beauty*, where dwell the souls of those who by its influence have been confirmed in the practice of virtue. Here he sees many glorified beings, and hears their *Hosanna*. Among them is Charles Martel, King of Hungary, Dante's intimate friend, who accosts him, and complains of his brother Robert's usurpation and misgovernment. He mentions the famed "Sicilian Vespers," and explains the causes of family degeneracy.

In its blind peril,[1] once the world believed
That the blithe radiance of licentious love
From the fair Cyprian Goddess was received,
In the third epicycle[2] seen to move.

[1] They were blind to the peril incurred by idol-worship.—*Isaiah* xliv. 19, 20.

[2] In his *Convito*, Dante, speaking of the equator says, "On the back of this circle, in the heaven of Venus, is a little sphere which has a revolution of its own, the circle of which astrologers call epicycle, which has its own equator, and revolves on its own poles, like the great sphere. And in the arc or tract of this lesser circle is fixed the most luminous star Venus; and as this is a heaven of itself, it is called, like the other heavens, by the name of its star."

An epicycle is a circle the centre of which is carried round upon another circle. Besides the crystal spheres or heavens revolving round the earth, to each of which one of the heavenly bodies was supposed to be attached, the Ptolemaic theory had recourse to

By sacrifice and prayers to her address'd,
Did those old pagans their old error prove.
Dionè[1] too, and Cupid[2] they confess'd,
The first her mother and the last her son,
And said that he reposed in Dido's breast.[3]

certain other suppositions found necessary to account for the observed phenomena. The simple irregularity of the planetary motions was explained by supposing the circular orbits in which they moved to be not concentric with the earth. Such a circle was called an "eccentric." The alternate progression and retrogression of the planet was explained by an "epicycle," the centre of which moved uniformly round the earth, while the planet moved round that centre—as the moon revolves round the earth and accompanies it in its annual revolution round the sun. In the nearer or lower part of the epicycle, the planet would appear to retrograde, but in the further or higher part, its motion would be in the same direction with that of its epicycle. Even Copernicus was not able to dispense with the epicycles, but his were more successful than those of Ptolemy, as they not only accounted for the angular motions of the planets known at that time, but made a much nearer approximation to correctness in accounting for their change of distance from the earth. Milton alludes to these expedients of an erroneous astronomical theory:

"To save appearances, how gird the spheres
With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb." *Par. Lost*, viii. 82—84.

[1] Dionè, beloved by Jupiter, by whom she became the mother of Aphroditè or Venus. Dante adopts this account, given by Homer and others, though Hesiod gives to Venus a different origin.

[2] Cupid, the son of Venus, by what father the poets are not agreed.

[3] In the first book of the *Æneid* (ll. 717—719), Cupid, having assumed the form of Ascanius, the hero's youthful son, to deceive the Queen, is caressed by her:—

"She fixed her eyes and her whole soul upon him,
And dandled him in her lap: unconscious was Dido
How powerful a God lay in ambush to make her wretched."

From her, with whom I have my song begun,
They took the name that star is known to bear,
Now scann'd in front, now hindmost, by the Sun.[1]
Of my flight thither I was not aware,
But ample proof my lady's looks disclose
That we had reach'd it, for she seem'd more fair.
And as in flame the sparkle brighter shows,
And as we also voice from voice discern,
While one holds on and one still comes and goes,[2]
I in that light saw other splendours burn;
Less or more swift they in a circle go,
Perhaps, as to the Eternal beam they turn.[3]
Never from chilling cloud rush'd wind below,
Or visible or not, the earth upon,[4]
That had not seem'd elaborate and slow,
Match'd with the speed with which toward us came on
Those living lights, from that ring-dance retiring,
First by the lofty seraphim[5] begun.

[1] Venus, as a planet, is in one part of her orbit identical with Lucifer, the Morning Star; and in another part of it, with Hesperus, the Evening Star.

"O Hesperus, thou bringest all good things;
Thou bringest wine, and spread'st the cheerful feast;
Thou to the mother's breast the infant bringest."

Fragment of SAPPHO.

[2] When one voice is employed without interruption, while another pauses and again joins in the song.

"His volant touch
Fled, and pursued transverse the resonant fugue."

Par. Lost, xi. 563.

[3] The Beatific Vision, of which each partakes according to the degree of his personal holiness.

[4] Whether laden with visible vapour or not.

[5] The circular motion communicated by the seraphim in the

And some behind the foremost rank were quiring[1]
A loud *Hosanna*, so that never I
Since then, again to hear it, cease desiring.
Then one of them to us approach'd more nigh,
And thus alone began; "We all are ready
To do thy pleasure and promote thy joy.
We by one thirst, one round, one motion steady,
With the celestial dominations rove,[2]
To whom thou in the world hast sung already,
'*Ye who the third heaven with discernment move*;'[3]
And love so fills us that to pleasure thee,
Short pause to us will not less grateful prove."
And then when towards my lady reverently
Mine eyes were turn'd, and she to them convey'd,
With fullest leave, content and certainty,
They to the light that had such promise made
Return'd;[4] and I inquired, "Say, who art thou?"
With voice which my great eagerness display'd.
Then, through a new access of gladness, how
With added splendour I beheld it glow,
Which still increased, at what I spake just now![5]
Thus was I answer'd, "In the world below,[6]

highest heaven, and propagated through all the inferior spheres. See Canto xxvii. 108.

[1] "Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim."
SHAKSPEARE, *Merchant of Venice*, v. 1.

[2] "*Principi celesti*;" the first choir of angels of the third hierarchy, who move the heaven of Venus. Canto xxviii. 76.

[3] The first line of Dante's first Canzone.

[4] Dante's eyes which had been turned from the shade of Charles to Beatrice, are now redirected to him.

[5] Thus Piccarda iii. 68, 69, and Justinian, v. 131, 132.

[6] Charles Martel, eldest son of Charles II. of Naples and Sicily,

Not long I tarried: evils will abound
Which had not happen'd, had not this been so.
My gladness hides me from thee, while around
It shines resplendently, concealing me,
Like Psyche in her silken fetters bound.
Great and well-founded was thy love to me,
For were I still on earth I would have shown,
And far beyond its leaves,[1] my love to thee.[2]
That left-hand bank laved by the rushing Rhone,[3]
Before the Sorga's[4] water with it blends,
Expected me their lord some day to own:
The Ausonian horn[5] which many a town defends,

Purg. xx. 79, note, and Maria, sister of Ladislaus king of Hungary, and daughter and heiress of Stephen V. His paternal grandfather was Charles of Anjou; he was married to Clemenza, daughter of the emperor Rudolph of Hapsburg, the founder of the Austrian dynasty. Ladislaus dying, Charles Martel was crowned king of Hungary at the age of 23, during his father's lifetime, and dying before him, his sons were excluded from the succession by the usurpation of his brother Robert, A.D., 1309. His longer life would have prevented this, as well as Robert's misgovernment and opposition to the emperor Henry VII. Charles Martel came to Florence to meet his father in 1295, where our poet became acquainted with him. This was the year of his death. To the king his father, Dante was twice ambassador at Naples. See *Purg.* vii. 103—130, and note.

[1] The silkworm, or incipient butterfly, in its cocoon. See *Purg.* x. 124, 125, and note.

[2] "Thou wouldst see the fruit of my regard to thee."

[3] Provence.

[4] A river that rises in Vaucluse.

[5] The southern fork of the Italian peninsula, which constituted the kingdom of Naples. Its extent is here indicated by Gaeta on the western, Bari on the eastern, and Crotona on the southern coasts, and the two rivers which marked its northern boundary,

Bari, Gaeta, and Crotona hoar,
Whence Tronto's, Verde's course in ocean ends.
My brow the shining crown already wore
Of lands by Danube wash'd,[1] when he has past
Along beyond his native German shore.
And fair Trinacria[2] (darkly overcast,

Tronto on the north-east, and Verde (now Garigliano) on the north-west. The country of the Ausones on the west coast (now known as Campania) gave the name of Ausonia, in poetry, to the whole of Italy.

[1] Hungary.

[2] So called from its triangular figure and its three principal promontories.—The island of Sicily. The eastern coast is occasionally darkened by the smoke of Ætna, and often lashed by the east wind.

"But Ætna near at hand thunders with horrible tumult,
And sometimes a black cloud breaks forth up to the ether,
Smoking with a whirlwind of pitch and burning cinders.
And sends up masses of fire, to the stars even reaching:
Sometimes rocks and the torn bowels of the mountains
Rising up, it vomits; and gathers in the air with groaning,
Liquefied stones, and from its very depths boils over. [bolt,
Fame says, that the body of Enceladus, half-burned by a thunder-
Is press'd by this mountain, and that with vast Ætna upon him,
He breathes out fire from its broken craters.
And as often as, when weary, he changes sides, all Trinacria
Shakes with tumultuous roar, and smoke obscures the heavens."
VIRGIL, *Æneid*, iii. 571—582.

"The vast isle of Trinacria was thrown on the gigantic members,
And with its mighty load presses the daring Typhœus
Lying under it, who hoped to gain the ethereal mansions.
He endeavours, indeed, and often struggles to rise again;
But his right hand is kept down by Ausonian Pelorus,
His left by Pachynus, his legs Lilibæum presses:
Ætna weighs down his head, under which on his back lying,
Sand he emits, and flames from his fierce mouth vomits.

Between Pachinus and Pelorus, where
The gulf receives the fiercest eastern blast,
Not through Typhæus but the sulphur there)
Would as her kings have still expected those
Who sons through me of Charles and Rodolf were,[1]
If that ill government, which overthrows
A subject people's patience had not been,
From which Palermo's cry, 'Death! Death!' arose.[2]

Often the weight of earth he strives to push back again,
And towns and great mountains to roll away from his body.
Thence the earth trembles," &c.—OVID, *Metam.*, 346—56.

[1] Charles Martel being grandson to Charles of Anjou and his wife Costanza, who was daughter to the emperor Rudolph of Hapsburg. Both ancestors are celebrated in *Purgatorio*, vii.

[2] The insolence, licentiousness, and oppression exercised by the French, had rendered them hateful to the Sicilians. A conspiracy, headed by John of Procida, had been formed for overturning their sway; and a single incident suddenly brought on the crisis. On Easter Monday 1282, a day on which Catholicism blends religion with gaiety, the citizens of Palermo set out, according to custom, to attend *Vespers* at the village-church of Montereale, not far distant. The French soldiers and authorities, without suspicion, joined the procession. Their conduct, as usual, to the young females of the company, was hardly restrained within the bounds of decorum. One Frenchman, who offered an insult to a young girl, was instantly killed by her betrothed. The intensity of feeling which pervaded the population rendered this a sufficient signal, and the cry was instantly raised of "Death to the French! Death to the family of Charles," and every Frenchman in the procession was immediately slain. The citizens returned to Palermo to complete their work of destruction. Only one Frenchman escaped: all besides, to the number of 4000 perished. Even women who had married Frenchmen were put to death with them, that the progeny of the hated foreigners might be eradicated from the island.

John of Procida hastened to Peter of Aragon, who after some

And had my brother this result foreseen,
The grasping Catalonian poverty,[1]
To spare offence, he would have shunn'd, I ween.
And he has need of foresight, certainly,
Attentive by himself or others, lest
His burden'd bark should overloaded be.
The nature, liberal once, by him possess'd,[2]
Now stoops to meanness: other troops needs he
Than those who only care to fill their chest."
"My lord," I said, "thy converse pours on me
Sublime delight, which thou, as I believe,
Where every good begins and ends dost see,
As I that joy within myself perceive:
And since thou seest it in the light of God,
The more I'm pleased, and its high worth conceive.
Me thou hast cheer'd; now be it clearly show'd,
And thus the speech thy doubt has raised efface,
How bitter fruit can grow from sweet seed sow'd?"[3]
He answer'd, "If I can before thee place
One truth, what thou inquirest and now hast

delay landed in Sicily, and was proclaimed king. A fleet of Charles, which had formed the siege of Messina, was captured, and soon after another, which he was preparing at Naples, was defeated by the admiral of Peter; and its commander, Charles's son, was taken prisoner.—*Purg.* xx. 79, and note.

[1] His brother Robert, while a hostage for his father, seven years in Catalonia, contracted friendship with many poor Catalans, whom he brought with him into Italy, and promoted to various offices, by which he gave great dissatisfaction to his subjects.

[2] His princely descent had not prevented him from becoming avaricious. Dante accuses the father of avarice. See *Purg.* xx. 80—84, and note.

[3] In allusion to what he had said in lines 82, 83.

Behind thee, thou shalt look on face to face.[1]
He who controls with goodness unsurpass'd,[2]
And blesses this whole realm now scaled by thee,
In his wise Providence these bodies vast
Endues with virtue, and not only He,
In his All-perfect Mind and foresight high,
Their nature wills but their security.
For whate'er arrow from this bow may hie,[3]
Unerringly must reach its destined aim,[4]
Like shaft that to its mark direct will fly.
Were it not so, this heaven whose beauteous frame
Thou treads't, would so exert its influence,
The effect not art but ruin we might name.[5]

[1] "What now thou dost not see at all thou shalt see plainly."

[2] Dante's argument is, that God in his providence employs the heavenly bodies and the intelligences who direct them, in accomplishing those purposes which are necessary for the welfare of human society; and this influence, which we call Nature, is unerring in its functions. But society could not exist without a variety of talents and pursuits. Providence, therefore, working through Nature, takes care to secure this variety, which parents should carefully attend to in choosing professions for their children. See *Inferno*, vii. 73—96.

[3] The due proportion between the numbers of both sexes, which is so important, but which the parents have no power to determine, seems wholly disregarded if we only look at single families; and yet is wonderfully maintained on a grand scale from age to age, and in all countries, and is one among innumerable proofs of the care exercised by the Author of Nature for the continuance and security of his works. See *Spectator*, No. 289, *Psalms* cxix. 89—91; cxxxix. 15, 16; *Proverbs* viii. 22—31; *Acts* xv. 18.

[4] "I do set my bow in the cloud."—*Gen.* ix. 13.

[5] If things had not been formed and were not governed with

This cannot be, unless the intelligence
Of those who guide the stars, and His too, fail
Who made them, lacking their due excellence.
Would'st thou that further I this truth detail?"
"Nay, nay," I said, "because I must allow,
Nature in what is needful cannot quail."
Then he rejoin'd, "Would it be worse, think'st thou,
Did man on earth no social pleasures know?"[1]
"Yes," I replied, "no reason ask I now."
"And could these be, unless men lived below
In various ways with different pursuits?
If well and truly writes your Master, No."[2]
Thus far his argument: "And since the fruits,"
He thus concluded, "if we them compare,
Have been so different, so must be their roots.[3]
Hence here is born a Solon, Xerxes there;
Melchizedeck is one, and he another
Who lost his son when flying through the air.[4]
Nature, who in her circle brings together
Her seal and mortal wax, her art well plies,
Nor difference knows of one house from another.

consummate wisdom, not law and order, but ruin and destruction would be the result.

[1] Literally, "If man were not a citizen;" that is, did not live in society, had no social intercourse with his fellow men.

[2] "Since a state is made up of members differing from each other, it necessarily follows, that the excellence of all the members of the state cannot be the same."—ARISTOTLE, *Polit.* iii. 4.

[3] That is, the causes must be different, since the effects are so.

[4] Solon, the lawgiver, Xerxes the king, Melchizedeck the priest, and Dædalus the inventor of arts, are here mentioned as representatives or types of their respective classes.

Hence Esau's path apart from Jacob's lies;[1] 130
And hence to Mars Quirinus[2] they assign—

[1] This example, intended here to illustrate the doctrines of judicial astrology, is fatal to their credit; for Jacob and Esau were *twins*. If it be replied, that the smallest diversity of place in the heavenly bodies at the time of *birth* was held sufficient to make an entire difference in the children even in the case of twins, this only tends to throw doubt on the certainty of any and of every horoscope. And why should the moment of birth be deemed all-important, more than that of conception, or any intermediate moment between that and the instant of birth?

Astrology did very well (for her professors) while the planets could maintain their Heptarchy; but when an addition was made to the perfect number seven, her long reign was ended. Astrology is now dead—or ought to be—as Swift said of Partridge the Almanack-Maker. Peace to her *Manes:* we can forgive her for the sake of her brighter child, Astronomy—the starry Science; even as we forgive her Sister, Alchemy, the parent of Chemistry. Both branches of the occult philosophy, after having reigned so long, died in giving birth to their illustrious offspring, for true science must ever be fatal to that which is false or fanciful. "What a plague did astronomers discover Herschell for?" says the astrological cobbler, in Bulwer Lytton's novel. "You see, sir, things odd and strange all come along o' Herschell. He's a awful star for females! But I only hope that they wont go a discovering any more stars. The world did a great deal better without the new one:—and they do talk of a Neptune—as bad as Saturn!"—BLACKWOOD'S *Maga*. 1857, vol. ii. p. 37.

At a time when Astrology was fashionable, Sir THOMAS BROWN, Knight, M.D., in his *Christian Morals*, wrote thus wisely:—"Burden not the back of Aries, Leo, or Taurus with thy faults, nor make Saturn, Mars, or Venus guilty of thy follies. Think not to fasten thy imperfections on the stars, and so despairingly conceive thyself under a fatal necessity of doing evil."

[2] Romulus, born of an anonymous father, so that when he became famous, his parentage was ascribed to Mars by the warlike people whom he governed and led to battle.

For a vile sire a parent in the skies!
The offspring's nature on the self-same line
Would march as did the father's evermore,
Were it not sway'd by Providence divine.
Now that which was behind thee is before.
But my delight in thee to show, I will
Add this one corollary to thy store:[1]
A nature, if by jarring Fortune still
Opposed, will then, like every other seed,
Out of its native region thrive but ill.[2]
And if the world would that foundation heed
Which Nature lays, and build thereon, while each
Made her their guide, a virtuous race 'twould breed.[3]
But you pervert a man to make him preach,
Though born his country to defend in war;
And make him king who should religion teach:
Hence from the path your footsteps wander far."[4]

[1] "*Ammanti:*"—"Put it under thy cloak."

[2] "Plants, as they are first influenced, have a manifest liking to a certain place, according as their complexion demands; and therefore we see some thrive beside the water, some on mountain-sides, others in the plains and at the foot of hills; which if they changed places, would either die entirely, or thrive wretchedly, because disjoined from what suited them."—DANTE, *Convito.*

[3] Persons who would excel in every kind of employment.

[4] "One man perhaps proves miserable in the study of the law, who might have flourished in that of physic or divinity. Another runs his head against a pulpit, who might have been very serviceable to his country at the plough. And a third proves a very dull and heavy philosopher, who possibly might have made a good mechanic, and have done well enough at the *useful philosophy* of the *Spade* or the *Anvil.*"—SOUTH's *Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. viii. p. 348.

CANTO IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Dante, while relating the conclusion of Charles Martel's discourse, apostrophises his daughter Clemenza. Still remaining in the sphere of Venus, he converses with Cunizza, sister of the cruel tyrant Ezzelino da Romana, who foretels the calamities of her country. The Provençal Troubadour, Folco of Marseilles, who points out Rahab, utters a severe invective against the Pope and his Cardinals, and predicts a Reformation of the Church.

WHEN, fair Clemenza![1] Charles thy sire for me
Had clear'd the doubt,[2] he then the wrongs explain'd
That must be borne by his posterity.[3]
But "Peace!" he said "and let the years ordain'd
Roll on," just vengeance,—more I cannot write,—
Will, hence, repay the wrongs by you sustain'd.
And now the aspect of that holy light [fill'd,
Turn'd towards the Sun[4] again, from whence 'twas
As to that good which pours forth all delight.
Ah! souls deceived, infatuate, and self-will'd, 10

[1] Daughter of Charles Martel, king of Hungary, and wife of Louis X., king of France.

[2] The doubt expressed Canto viii. 93.

[3] Carlo Roberto, or Carobert, son of Charles Martel, was excluded from the succession to the crown of Sicily by the usurpation of his uncle Robert.

[4] The Sun of Righteousness.

Who turn your hearts from good so real, ye
To vanity direct your thoughts unskill'd.
And of those splendours, lo, to pleasure me,
Another now approaching signified
Her wish, by lustre shown externally.
On me the eyes of Beatrice my guide,
Fix'd as before, me of their dear assent
To my desire now fully certified.[1]
"Ah! let my wish have quick accomplishment,"
I said, "blest spirit; proof let me obtain,[2]
That I my reflex thought in thee present."
From the profound whence came its former strain,
The light, still new to me, whose talk I craved,
Went on, as if to gladden me 'twas fain.
"In that part of the Italian soil depraved
Between Rialto[3] and the region by

[1] See Canto viii. 41, 42.

[2] "Prove to me that what I think, is reflected in thy mind; so as to be known to thee without the necessity of my revealing it by speech."

[3] The Rialto, here put for Venice, is the abbreviated name of an island, one of the mud-banks first occupied by the founders of Venice. It was called *Ripa Alta*, or *Riva Alta*, the High Bank. The bridge which connects it with the other parts of Venice is called *Il Ponte di Rialto*. On the island is the Exchange, or place of meeting for the merchants of different nations. The present Ponte di Rialto, which spans the canal, and by the magnificence of its situation strikes every beholder, did not exist in the age of Dante, but was commenced in 1588, under the Doge Pasquali Cicogna.

"Signor Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my monies and my usances."

SHAKSPEARE, *The Merchant of Venice.*

The Brenta's and Piave's fountains laved,
There swells a hill[1] that mounts not very high,
From whence descended once a torch of war[2]
Which did the country greatly damnify.
Of one root I and he the offspring are:[3]
Cunizza I am call'd, and here I shine,[4]
Since I was vanquish'd by this brilliant star.
But fain myself I to the cause resign
Of this my lot—though to your vulgar eyes
This may seem strange—nor do I aught repine.
This lucid one, whom we so dearly prize,
The jewel of our heaven, now nearest me,
Has left great fame on earth, which ere it dies,[5]

[1] On which was the castle of Romano.

[2] This was the tyrant Ezzelino II., seen by the poet, with other tyrants in the river of blood.—*Inferno*, xii. 110.

[3] "We were children of the same father."

[4] "I shine in this star of Venus, because I was born and lived under its prevailing influence." Like the woman of Samaria (*John* iv. 18), she had several husbands in succession. Like the Wife of Bath, in Chaucer,

"She was a worthy woman all hire live,
Housebonds at the chirche dorè had she five."

[5] Folco of Genoa (sometimes called Folchetto, Folquet, or Fulk) went to reside at Marseilles, where he married, and composed many verses in praise of Adalagia, wife of the viscount its chief governor. At her death, he being then a widower, his grief induced him to enter the Cistercian order. By some he has been identified with Folquet, Bishop of Toulouse, the perfidious and cruel persecutor, who assisted Simon de Montfort in the massacre of the Albigenses; and "who rendered himself more odious by his infamous treacheries than even by the punishments he inflicted."—SISMONDI, *Lit. S. Europe*, vol. i. p. 159. Bohn, 1846.

If this is true, and if there is no mistake in the identity, Dante, instead of placing Folco in the Star of Beauty, should

Its hundredth year told five times o'er will see :
  Mark how to him whose deeds are excellent,
  Another life beyond the first shall be !
On this the existing crowd are not intent,
  Whom Tagliamento and the Adige bound,
  Nor do they although beaten yet repent.
But soon will Padua to the marshy ground
  The water tinge which laves Vicenza there,
  So strange to duty are its people found.
Where Silè and Cagnano meet and pair,
  One lords it, and with head uplifted goes,
  To capture whom even now they weave the snare.
Feltro will yet lament the crime which throws
  Guilt on her impious pastor ; foul as he
  Are none on whom the gates of Malta close.
Ample the tub to catch the blood must be[1]
  That from Ferrara's denizens will flow,
  And ounce by ounce 'twould be weigh'd wearily,
Which yet this courteous priest will give to show
  His party ; and such gifts 'tis understood,
  Accordant with his country's custom go.
Mirrors above, call'd thrones, by us are view'd,
  God's judgments they reflect with brighter sheen,[2]

have plunged him either in the river of blood with Ezzelino, or in Ptolomea with Friar Alberigo !

[1] "Such will be the desire of this priest to show himself a zealous partizan of the papacy, that no vessel of ordinary dimensions would be capacious enough to hold the blood which he will offer to his holiness."

[2] The third order of the celestial hierarchy called thrones, being nearer to God, receive like mirrors, the revelation of his future judgments, so that their announcements may be regarded as just and infallible.—*Rev.* i. 1, 2 ; xvii. 1.

So that these words of mine may well seem good."
Here she was silent, seeming by her mien
On something else intent, as she withdrew
And join'd the circle where she erst had been.
Meanwhile the other joyful spirit grew
A thing most glorious, till it came to be
Like a fine sun-lit ruby to my view.
In heaven through joy they glow more brilliantly,
As here we smile; but when the shades below
Feel inward grief, they darken outwardly.
"God seëth all, and thy sight entereth so[1]
In Him," I said, "no cloud its shadow flings
On aught He wills, which thou, blest soul, must know.
Why doth not then thy voice, which rapture brings
Always in heaven with song of those blest fires
Who make a sacred cloak of their six wings,[2]
Now speak and satisfy my strong desires?
I would not wait thy asking if I scann'd[3]
Thy thought, as thou dost what my wish requires."
"The greatest vale in which the waves expand"[4]
Thus did his answer, now commencing, run,
"Except the ocean that surrounds the land,
Between discordant shores,[5] against the sun

[1] As God knows all things, they who have the most intimate communion with him know more than others, of his mind and purposes.

[2] "Above it stood the seraphim, each one had six wings, with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly."—*Isaiah* vi. 2. See Canto viii, 35, note.

[3] "My desire to know thy name and condition."

[4] The Mediterranean.

[5] The coasts of Europe and Africa.

So far extends that for meridian he
The horizon takes where he his course begun.
That valley's coast gave birth and home to me,[1]
'Twixt Ebro and the Magra whose curt path
Divides the Genoese from Tuscany.
Just the same west and east Bugéa hath,
As that fair country from whose bounds I came,
Whose blood once warm'd her port through Cæsar's [wrath.[2]
Folco that people call'd me, and my name[3]
Was there of note; and since I was inspired
By this fair star, my dwelling it became:
Not more than I was Belus' daughter fired,[4]
When to Sichæus and Creüsa fail'd
Her faith,—when I the manly down acquired;
Not she, o'er whom in Rhodopè prevail'd

[1] So erroneous was the geography of Dante's time, that he makes the Mediterranean extend ninety degrees from west to east.

[2] Marseilles is about equally distant from the Ebro in Spain and the Magra in Italy, and has the same meridian as Bugia, Bugea, or Bujayah, on the opposite coast of Africa. From this town, whence the choicest wax is imported, the French name for a wax-candle, *bougie*, is taken. The slaughter in the port of Marseilles by Cæsar's forces is described by LUCAN; *Phars.* iii. 572.

Dante's description better applies to Marseilles where Folco flourished, than to Genoa his birth-place. In the harbour of Genoa, however, there was a terrible slaughter of the Genoese by the Saracens in 936.

[3] "Folco, who to Marseilles his name has given,
And from Genoa taken it; at the last
Changed, for the better country, dress and state."
PETRARCH, *Trionfo d'Amore*, iv. 49.

[4] See *Æneid*, i. iv. Dido, the daughter of Belus, and widow of Sichæus. Creüsa, the former wife of Æneas.

Demóphoön's deceit;[1] not great Alcides
When in his heart Iölè was conceal'd.[2]
For this no keen remorse where we abide is;
We smile, not for our fault forgot,[3] but love
To Him whose work to order and provide is.
The adorning art we here inspect and prove,
Which works such great effect,[4] and mark the good
By which our earth waits on the world above.
But that thy wish born here, in plenitude
Of science may go hence, it may be right
That my discourse should further be pursued.
Who this is, thou wouldst know, within the light
Which here is seen thus radiant, near to me,
As in clear water shines a sunbeam bright.

[1] Demophoön, son of Theseus and Phædra, in returning from Troy, gained the affections of Phyllis, daughter of the Thracian king Sethon, and promised her marriage. As a preliminary to the nuptials, he went to Athens to settle his affairs, but as he tarried longer than she expected, she thought herself neglected or forgotten, and committed suicide. She is fabled to have been changed into a tree. Rhodope is one of the highest mountain ranges of Thrace.—Ovid, *Heroides*, ii.

[2] Iolè, a daughter of Eurytus, king of Œchalia, was beloved by Hercules (called Alcides from his grandfather Alcæus) and was promised to him in marriage by her father; in consequence of whose refusal to perform his engagement, Hercules made war on him, and having slain him and his sons, carried off Iolè. It was to win him from this attachment, that Dejanira presented him with the fatal garment steeped in the blood of Nessus; and in fulfilment of his command his son Hyllus married Iolè.—Ovid. *Metam.* ix. 11, 279. See *Inferno*, xii. 67, and note.

[3] In consequence of having tasted Lethe.—*Purg.* xxxi. 101 · xxxiii. 99, note.

[4] Instead of *effetto*, some copies have *affetto*, passion, affection.

Know that therein rejoices tranquilly
Rahab, who of our order one was made,
And bears its impress in the first degree.
She to this heaven, where terminates the shade[1]
Projected by your earth, before the rest
With Christ's ascending triumph was convey'd.[2] 120
'Twas very fit that through the palm-branch blest,
She in some heaven, by that high victory [rest.
Won by those pierced and outstretch'd palms, should
Because that earliest glory favour'd she
By Joshua gain'd within the Holy land,
Of which the Pope hath now brief memory.[3]
Thy city sown by him whose daring hand[4]
First raised revolt against his Maker's power,
And whose great envy causes to expand
On that portentous plant the accursed flower,[5] 130

[1] According to the Almagest of Ptolemy, which Dante follows, the cone formed by the shadow of the earth extends its apex to the sphere of the planet Venus, but no further.

The hypothesis of the Earth's being the centre of all the celestial motions is here assumed. On the *true* theory of the Solar system, as the orbit of the Earth is *exterior* to that of Venus, the Earth's shadow not only never can reach it, but *cannot even fall towards it*, or be projected in its direction.

[2] The victory of Christ, when he released the Spirits of the Patriarchs from Limbo.—See *Inferno*, iv. 54, and note.

[3] Who care not that the Holy Land is in the possession of Infidels.

[4] At the commencement of her history, Florence was devoted to the worship of Mars; and the poet asserts that she was yet so far heathen, that envy, the very sin of Satan, greatly flourished in her.

[5] The gold coin of Florence, called the Florin, stamped with a lily, the intense desire of which prompted the Pope to so much evil.

Which makes both sheep and lambs forsake the fold,[1]
Since like a wolf the Shepherd will devour.
Through this the Gospel and the Doctors old
Are left, and only o'er Decretals bent[2]
They pore, the proof of which their margins hold.
The Pope and Cardinals on this intent,
Their thoughts to Nazareth will ne'er direct,
Whither with outspread pinions Gabriel went.[3]
The Vatican and other parts elect
Of Rome, the cemetery known to be
The dust of Peter's warriors to protect,[4]
Shall quickly from the adulterer's power be free."[5]

[1] "Has led astray both clergy and people."

[2] The study of the Scriptures, and of the Primitive fathers, is forsaken for that of the Canon law.

In the 13th and 14th centuries, the study of civil and canon law held the first rank in the circle of the sciences, and was pursued by almost all who aspired to literary distinction. Some employed their efforts in collecting the letters of the Roman Pontiffs, commonly known under the name of the *Decretals*, and which were regarded as a very important branch of Ecclesiastical law. Raimond of Pennafort, at the instance of Gregory IX., collected them in five books, which that pontiff honoured with his name, and ordered to be added to the Decretals of Gratian, and read in all the European colleges. Towards the conclusion of the century, Boniface VIII. had a new collection made, which was entitled *The Sixth Book of the Decretals*, and added to the five already mentioned.—MOSHEIM, *Ecc. Hist.*, cent. xiii. pt. ii. ch. i.

[3] Luke, i. 19, 26, 27.

[4] The martyrs who suffered at Rome after St. Peter and St. Paul.

[5] Dante predicts that Rome and the faithful should not only see the return of her Bishop from Avigon, but also behold the separation of the temporal from the spiritual sovereignty, the union of which, for so long a period, has made the Papacy "the worst government in Christendom."

CANTO X.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Order of the Universe. Dante finds that, accompanied by Beatrice, he has unawares been transported to the fourth sphere, or *Orb of the Sun*, the *Star of Wisdom*, or *Heaven of the Enlightened*. The poet and his guide are quickly encircled by a band of glorious beings, who assume the form of a wreath or garland, and utter divine melody. One of them, St. Thomas Aquinas, addresses Dante, and describes to him the famous doctors and theologians of the church there present:—Albert of Cologne, Gratian, Peter Lombard, King Solomon, Dionysius, Orosius, Boethius, Isidore, Bede, and Richard St. Victor,—who do homage to Beatrice.

GAZING on his own Son, with all the love
Which by them both is breathed[1] eternally,[2]
The primal Power ineffable above
Works with such order, that whoe'er he be
That turns his eye or mind around him feels
Delighted with whatever he may see.[3]

[1] "*Spira.*" Some interpret this of the Holy Spirit.

[2] "Then was I by him as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."—*Prov.* viii. 30.

[3] "Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily (fortiter); and sweetly (suaviter) doth she order all things."—*Wisdom* viii. 1. (Hence the saying, "Suaviter in modo, et fortiter in re.") "But thou hast ordered all things in measure and number and weight." *Ib.* xi. 20.

Raise then, O reader, to the lofty wheels[1]
With me thy vision, turn'd to that part where
Its stroke one motion on another deals.[2]
And now begin thy loving study there
Of the great Master's art, who loves it so,
Ne'er from his watch thereof can he forbear.[3]
See from that point the oblique circle go,
Bearing the planets in their course assign'd,
That what earth from them claims they may bestow.[4]
And if their pathway were not thus inclined,
Much virtue in the sky had been in vain,
And earth all power well nigh extinct would find.
Or had it more or less obliquely lain
In its departure, then of order less
Through heaven and earth would in creation reign.[5]

[1] "The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: as for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful."—*Ezek.* i. 16, 18.

[2] There are two points where, at the vernal and autumnal equinox, the equator or equinoctial circle, and the ecliptic or zodiac intersect each other. Here, according to the Ptolemaic system, the common motion of the heavens from east to west, produced by the motion of the Crystalline or Primum Mobile, might be said to strike with the greatest force on the motion proper to the sun and other planets; because this part of the heavens being at the greatest distance from the poles, its velocity must be the greatest. The part of the zodiac referred to by Dante is *Aries*, the time of the vision being near that of the *Vernal Equinox*.

[3] See *Psalm* cxlv. 9; *Matt.* x. 29, 30.

[4] "*Chiami*," calls for; *i. e.* requires or needs: namely, the change of seasons, &c.

[5] Without the obliquity of the ecliptic, or were the angle formed by it and the equator considerably greater or less, the

Now resting, reader, on thy bench, address
Thy thoughts to this foretasting; so delight
Abundant shall prevent thy weariness.
I've spread the feast; now sate thine appetite.[1]
For my whole care must be to bend my rhyme
Back to the theme on which I am to write.
Great Nature's minister the most sublime,
Who stamps the world with heavenly brilliancy,[2]
And with his lustre measures out our time,
Was in that part above described by me,
From which his path is to a spiral bent,[3]
While earlier every morning rises he:
And I was with him; but of my ascent
I knew no more, than ere its earliest date
A man can know his thought's first element.[4]
'Twas Beatrice who, to that better state
From good, so suddenly transported me,

advantages which the earth derives from the present arrangement could not exist.

[1] "The feast of reason and the flow of soul."

[2] "The Sun, of this great world both eye and soul."

MILTON, *Par. Lost.*

"Thou earliest minister of the Almighty!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes!"

BYRON, *Manfred.*

[3] The *apparent* course of the Sun from the Equator to the tropic of Cancer (the earth being considered as fixed) is convoluted or spiral; so that between the vernal equinox and the summer solstice every day begins earlier.

[4] If we but knew how the mind begins to exercise its consciousness, and to reflect on what is presented to it through the medium of the senses, we should have an advantage in the study of Psychology greater than any which we at present possess. But as this commencement of thought, in each individual, takes place

That none by time her act could estimate.[1]
How glorious they must in their nature be
Where I had enter'd, in the Sun seen bright,
Not by their hues but greater brilliancy.[2]
But should I genius, practice, art invite,
Their true idea I could not declare;
Yet Faith may well be eager for the sight.[3]
And if our fancies are too low to dare
Such height, not marvellous will it appear:
No eye a light beyond the Sun's could bear.[4]
Such was the family in that fourth sphere,
Whom that high Sire aye fills with extacy,
Showing his Spirit breathed and Offspring dear.
"Thanks," Beatrice commencing said to me,
"Thanks to the Sun of angels give, whose grace
To this conspicuous orb hath lifted thee."
Never did heart of mortal give such place
To piety, or yield itself to God
With all its powers, and in so brief a space,
As mine did, while she spake these words aloud.

at a date earlier than any to which memory can carry us back, it must remain shrouded in the deepest mystery.

[1] (A Spirit *loquitur*:)

"With us acts are exempt from time, and we
Can crowd eternity into an hour,
Or stretch an hour into eternity;
We breathe not by a mortal measurement:
But that's a mystery."—BYRON.

[2] *Acts* xxvi. 13.

[3] "For we walk by faith, not by sight."—2 *Cor.* v. 7.

[4] The mind cannot reach the reality of things beyond the sphere of the senses, any more than the eye could endure a brightness greater than that of the sun.

And now my love to Him so wholly burn'd,
That she was hidden by oblivion's cloud.
Nor was she grieved, as by her smile I learn'd;
But from her laughing eyes beam'd so much light[1]
That my rapt thoughts to other objects turn'd.[2]
More living splendours yet o'erpower'd my sight;
Round us their centre in a ring they were,[3]
More sweet in voice than in their aspect bright.
Thus oft we see, when teems the rimy air,
Latona's daughter with a halo round,
While holds the thread that weaves her girdle there;[4]
In heaven's high court, whence I return, are found
Many choice jewels beautiful and dear,[5]
So that they cannot pass that kingdom's bound.[6]
Such was the song these lights were chanting here;
Whoever is not wing'd for flight above,

[1] She smiled with complacency, that Dante had so well attended to her exhortation, lines 52, 53; and the additional splendour which this pleasure gave to her eyes made them sparkle through the blessedness of Paradise.—BIAGIOLI.

[2] The other blessed spirits.

[3] "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses."—*Heb.* xii. 1. See also 2 *Kings* vi. 17.

[4] A luminous ring, often of considerable size, may sometimes be observed round the moon, the intermediate space being darker than the rest of the sky. In a certain state of the atmosphere the vapours with which it abounds cause the refraction of the rays of light which penetrate them. The ring is called a halo or crown, and the condition of the atmosphere which produces it is the "thread" alluded to.

[5] *Malachi* iii. 17.

[6] *Ne exeat regno.* Of such rare value that their exportation is not permitted.

News from the dumb thereof may hope to hear.[1]
When, singing thus, these ardent suns had wove
In dance about us thrice their circling way,
Like stars around the steady pole that move,
They seem'd to me like ladies who delay
Their dance unfinish'd, listening silently
Until they have caught up anew the lay.[2]
And of their choir I heard one say to me,
"Since the bright ray of grace from heaven descended,
Kindling true love which then grows lovingly,
In thee hath been so multiplied and splendid,
It leads thee up the stairs down which none go,
Save those by whom they will be reascended.[3]
He who to quench thy thirst will not bestow
From his own phial wine, is no more free
Than streams when to the sea they cannot flow.[4]
What those flowers are, thou fain wouldst know of me,
That form this garland, sweetly circling round
The lady fair, to Heaven who succours thee.
I of the holy flock a lamb was found
Who led by Dominic on that pathway hie[5]

[1] Their song surpasses description; so that it were as vain to expect an adequate description, as to look for tidings from the dumb.

[2] Listening intently for the strain to which their dance must keep time.

[3] The allusion is to Jacob's ladder. See Canto xxi. 28, note, and *John* i. 51.

[4] "No one at liberty to supply thy thirst for information would refuse to do so."

[5] The order of St. Dominic and its constitutions received the sanction of Pope Honorius III. Dec. 26th, 1216. Its monks were called *Preaching Friars*, because public instruction was the

Where well they fatten, if not grown unsound.
He on my right is Albert—nearest by—[1]
My brother and my teacher, whose sojourn
Was in Cologne; Thomas Aquinas I.[2]

principal end of their institution. They were afterwards called Dominicans in honour of their founder, during whose lifetime the order was extended into most European kingdoms. On visiting Paris he settled a monastery in the Rue St. Jaques, whence in France the monks of this order are named Jacobins. A short time before his death he sent Gilbert de Fresney with twelve monks into England, where they founded their first monastery at Oxford, A.D. 1221, and soon after another in London. In 1276, the Mayor and Aldermen of the city gave them two whole streets close to the river Thames, where they erected a very commodious convent. From the black cloak and hood which they wore in the streets they were called *Black Friars*, a name still retained by the locality which was formerly their abode.

[1] Albertus Magnus, born at Laugingen in Thuringia, A.D. 1193, studied at Paris and Padua, at which latter place he entered the Dominican order. He taught theology at Cologne and other places in Germany. In 1260 he became Bishop of Ratisbon, and so sincere was his *Nolo episcopari*, that in two years after he resigned his bishopric and returned to his favourite studies at Cologne.

[2] See *Purgatorio* xx. 69, note. T. Aquinas was the favourite and most renowned pupil of Albertus Magnus. His noble parents and family vainly endeavoured to divert him from a life of consecrated study. These two truly great men, Mosheim says, "sat unrivalled at the head of the Divines of the 13th century, and held the principal place among those who digested the doctrines of Christianity into a regular system, and illustrated and explained them in a scientific manner." These, and "he who hight Irrefragable," Alexander Hales, an English Franciscan, who taught philosophy at Paris, were the authors of an intellectual revolution in Europe, by inculcating, illustrating, and enforcing the doctrines of Aristotle in their lectures and writings, and by a new transla-

Who all the others are, if thou wouldst learn,
As I describe them let thine eye precise
Its glance up through yon blessèd garland turn.
That other corruscation takes its rise
From Gratian's smile, who such assistance lent[1]
To either court, as pleased in Paradise.
That next him, of our choir the ornament,
Was Peter Lombard;[2] like the widow poor,[3]
He to the Church did his whole store present.

tion of his works, made under the inspection of T. Aquinas. By these means the philosophy of the Stagyrite, notwithstanding the opposition of several divines, and even of the Roman Pontiffs, triumphed in the schools, and displaced every other system that had previously been received.—See *Inferno*, iv. 132, note.

[1] A Benedictine monk of Bologna, born in Tuscany, who about A.D. 1130, composed an epitome of *Canon-law*, drawn from the letters of the Pontiffs, the decrees of Councils, and the writings of the ancient doctors. Although full of defects, yet as its main design was to support the despotism and extend the authority of the Roman Pontiffs, the applause and patronage which it received in an age of tyranny, superstition, and ignorance, rendered it in process of time the text-book in most of the European colleges.—*Mosheim*, cent. xiii. part ii, cap. i. § 6.

[2] Peter, Bishop of Paris, surnamed Lombard, from the country of his birth, composed a work entitled *Four Books of the Sentences*, a collection of opinions from the works of the Latin doctors, forming a more complete system than any that had preceded it. It was received with universal applause, and acquired a high degree of authority; on which account he was called "Master of the Sentences."

[3] *Mark* xii. 41—44. In the commencement of his *Liber Sententiarum*, Peter Lombard says, "Cupiens aliquid de pecunia ac tenuitate nostra cum pauperculâ in gazophylacium domini mittere, &c. (Wishing out of my penury and indigence like the poor widow to cast something into the treasury of the Lord, &c.)"

The fifth, among us fair all else before,
Breathes of such love that all the world below[1]
Tidings of him are eager to explore.
Therein is that high light where wisdom so
Profound was treasured, that, if truth is true,[2]
No second hath arisen so much to know.
Next see the light of that wax-taper who,
Below in flesh most intimately saw
The angelic ministry and nature too.[3]

[1] In that exquisite poem the *Book of Canticles*, to which we have never seen justice done in any published English version.

On the question of Solomon's final condition there was, as intimated by Dante, a diversity of opinion in the middle ages. The Sacred history leaves a painful doubt in the mind of the reader, as its account of the wise king of Israel closes with his apostacy. But there is incidental evidence that in taking the affirmative side of this question, Dante was right. The *Book of Ecclesiastes* was evidently penned by him, after his apostacy, and affords a pleasing proof of his repentance. Its language is that of one who had not only been engaged in great public undertakings, but also had gone the whole round of worldly pleasure, and been led by the very variety and completeness of his pursuits, and his satiety of worldly joys, to despair of happiness from the creature; and on a retrospect of his whole career to return to the fear of God and the practice of his commandments.—Compare *Eccles.* vii. 26—28 with 1 *Kings* xi. 3.

[2] 1 *Kings* iii. 12; 2 *Chron.* i. 12.

[3] The work *De cœlesti Hierarchiâ*, published under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, has been proved a forgery. See DUPIN, *Hist. of Ecc. Writers.* It was first quoted by the Severian heretics in their conference with the Orthodox at Constantinople, A.D. 532. In Dante's uncritical age, the writings of "the famous Grecian fanatic who gave himself out for Dionysius the Areopagite, and who lived most probably in the fourth century, though some place him earlier and others later" (MOSHEIM), might easily

Next in that lesser light of Christian law,
Smiles the sage advocate of Truth's own fanes,[1]
From whose rich store Augustine deign'd to draw.
Now, if thy mental eye the sight sustains,
Following from light to light my praise express'd,[2]
Yet for the eighth of them thy thirst remains:
Therein, because all good he sees, is blest
The saintly soul who the world's guileful shows
To all who heed him well makes manifest.[3]

pass for genuine, like the fictitious grant of Constantine to Sylvester.

[1] Paulus Orosius, a learned presbyter, born at Tarragona, near the end of the fourth century, and educated in Spain. In Africa he benefited by the instruction of Augustine, who recommended him to St. Jerome for his further improvement. While in Palestine he wrote an answer to Pelagius, about 415, and on his return in 416, finished his compendious *History of the World*, which he had undertaken at the request of Augustine. It is written to prove how much the world had benefited by the Christian Revelation. Augustine, in his *De Civitate Dei*, availed himself of the erudition and arguments of Orosius, whose history during the middle ages was held in the highest esteem. It was translated into Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred, for the instruction of his people. A splendid edition of this translation, with an English version, has recently been published by the learned and accomplished professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Oxford, the Rev. Joseph Bosworth, D.D., F.R.S., F.S.A., &c. &c.

[2] "If thine eye is not overpowered by following me from light to light, as I describe them, having passed seven of them, thou wilt now be desirous of knowing the eighth."

[3] Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, a Roman statesman, and almost the only Latin philosopher of the sixth century, was born between A.D. 470 and 475. He was Consul in 510, and was long held in the highest esteem by Theodoric King of the Ostrogoths, then master of Italy, by whom he was raised to the first offices of the empire. But the Gothic masters of the Italians,

The limbs, whence he was chased, on earth repose
In Cieldauro; and from exile's ban
And martyrdom he to this peace arose.[1]
Sparkling beyond, the ardent spirit scan
Of Isidore,[2] of Bede,[3] of Richard[4]—shown

whose oppressions he had opposed, excited against him the suspicion of Theodoric, by whom he was imprisoned in the tower of Pavia, where he wrote his immortal work *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, which is composed alternately in prose and verse. The diction is pure and elegant, and the sentiments are noble and elevated, showing that, though he makes no reference to Christianity, he had a real belief in Providence and the efficacy of prayer. He is the last Roman who is known to have understood the language and studied the literature of Greece.

[1] He was put to death about A.D. 524, and buried at Pavia, in the monastery of St. Pietro in Cieldauro, or Ciel d'oro.

[2] He was forty years Archbishop of Seville, and died A.D. 635. He wrote *The Book of Allegories upon the Holy Scriptures*, and was one of that class of Theologians who, in imitation of Origen, adopt that allegorical method of interpretation by which, with the help of a luxurious fancy, the Sacred Scriptures may be made to prove any conceit which the expositor may have adopted.

[3] Surnamed "the Venerable," born at Wearmouth in 672 and died 735. Invited to Rome by Pope Sergius I. he preferred the seclusion of a monastic life to the splendour of a court. He was Abbot of Jarrow, and composed a great number of works on ecclesiastical and civil affairs and literary and scientific subjects. His history of what took place in his own time is accurate, but he was too credulous in relating what he learned from others. In his Chronology he follows the text of the Hebrew Bible, and was the first who rejected (mistakenly, no doubt), the Chronology of the Septuagint.

[4] Richard of St. Victor, brother of Hugo di San Vittore, was a native of Ireland, and Prior of the monastery of St. Victor, in Paris; died A.D. 1173. He was the principal Mystical writer of the 12th century.

It is to the credit of Dante's impartiality that he almost equally

To be in deep reflection more than man.
This one, whence back to me thy glance is thrown
Is a soul's light, in whose grave thoughts grown weary,
Death seem'd his tardy coming to postpone.
This is the eternal beam of Sigieri,
Who, as he lectured in the Street of Straw,[1]
With zeal for truth discuss'd each dangerous query."
As when the bell chimes, making sleep withdraw,
At matins[2] risen the Bride of God is found
To praise her Spouse belovèd;[3] while to draw
And urge each part alternate, with a sound
Whose ding dong rings with such melodious tone,
It makes the well-disposed with love abound.
And thus to me the glorious wheel was shown,[4]
Voice answering voice in perfect harmony,
And with such sweetness as could not be known
Save there where they rejoice eternally.

lauds the Mystics and the Scholastics, although the dissention between them was so great that it required the authority of Pope Alexander III. to restore tranquillity to the Church, which had been so disturbed by their controversy.

[1] A monk of the Abbey of Gemblours, who was in high repute at the end of the 11th and beginning of the 12th centuries. A French theologian and philosopher, and a public lecturer in Paris. The "Rue du Fouarre (Street of Straw)" where he lectured, connects the Rue de la Galande and the Rue de la Bucherie, at the right of the *Hotel de Ville*. It received its name from the fact, says Biagioli, that his school having neither benches nor seats, each scholar had to bring a bundle of straw to sit upon.

[2] Morning Song.

[3] In allusion to the Book of Canticles, and to *Eph.* v. 23—32, *Rev.* xix. 7—9, xxi. 2—10.

[4] He compares the circle of beatified spirits and their song to the bell-ringing for matins; reminding one of Bishop Ken's beautiful morning hymn.

CANTO XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The vanity of worldly pursuits. St. Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican, resolves one of two doubts which had sprung up in the mind of Dante, from the discourse in the last Canto. He describes the life and character of St. Francis, who chose Poverty for his bride, and the establishment and rule of his order. He severely censures his own confreres, the Dominicans, for their disregard of the precepts and example of their Founder, by the indulgence of a worldly spirit.

O the vain care that mortal men bestow!
How feeble is that reason syllogistic
Which makes you flutter thus your wings below.[1]
One studies law; the science aphoristic[2]
Another; one to priesthood is inclined;[3]
Some reign by violence and talk sophistic;
Some rob, and some their civil business mind;
And some involved in carnal gaiety
Are jaded, some to indolence resign'd.[4]

[1] The arguments and reasonings by which the soul is induced to prefer a worldly and sinful course to a life of piety.

[2] One of the numerous works which have come down to us from Hippocrates, the most celebrated physician of antiquity, entitled *The Aphorisms*, is here put for the study of Medicine.

[3] Dante here censures those who enter on the Sacred Office for the sake of wealth or grandeur.

[4] "Some perishing of pleasure—some of study—
Some worn with toil—some of mere weariness."
BYRON, *Manfred*, iii. 1.

While I, from all these interruptions free,
Mounted with Beatrice on high, and there
Was entertain'd in heaven so gloriously.
Soon as to that point of the circle where
He was before, each had return'd, he seem'd
Fix'd as a wax-light in a chandelier.
And from within that lustre, as it beam'd
With yet more glowing smile, which had before
Been talking with me, this commencement stream'd:
"Thus kindled by his rays whom I adore,
Of that eternal light such view I gain,
That I thy thoughts and whence they spring explore.[1]
Thou doubtèst, and wouldst have me sift again
My speech, and all obscurity dispel,
So that it may be to thy reason plain;
When I of late said, 'Here they fatten well,'[2]
And did, 'No second hath arisen,' rehearse:[3]
Here on some nice distinctions we must dwell.
That Providence which rules the universe
With such deep counsel, that created mind
Is lost ere to the bottom it can pierce;[4]
That her Belovèd she might seek and find
Whom He espoused when he so loudly cried,[5]
And with His blessed blood pour'd forth did bind
Secure and faithful as his plighted Bride;
Two princes he appointed to attend her,
Who should on either hand her footsteps guide.
One all seraphic, ardent, loving tender;[6]
The other was on earth, in wisdom rare,

[1] See Canto ix, 73, and note. [2] Canto x. 96.
[3] Canto x. 114. [4] *Romans* xi. 33, 34. [5] The Church.
[6] St. Francis.

A radiation of cherubic splendour.[1]
Since he lauds both who praises one, whiche'er
He takes, I will of one the life disclose,
Because to the same end their efforts were.
Between Tupino and the streams descending[2]
From the hill chosen by the blest Ubaldo,[3]
The lofty mountain's fertile[4] slope is bending,
Whence cold and heat[5] Perugia's people all do
Through Porta Solè feel: behind it mourn
The yoke that galls them Nocera and Gualdo.[6]
There where the slope most gently falls was born[7]

[1] St. Dominic. It was a fancy of some of the Christian Fathers, that the Seraphim love most, and the Cherubim know most.

[2] The rivers Tupino and Chiassi, or Chiagio (the latter of which rises near Gubbio), uniting below Assissi, empty themselves into the Tiber at Torciano.

[3] Made Bishop of Gubbio, A.D. 1128. When the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, in his cruel wars in Italy, having plundered Spoleto, threatened Gubbio with like treatment, Ubaldo met him on the road, and by softening his heart, obtained from him the safety of the city. He died in 1160, and was canonized by Celestine III. in 1192.—A. BUTLER.

[4] Fertile in olives.

[5] The cold from the mountain snows in winter, and heat from the sun's reflection by the rocks in summer.

[6] The heavy impositions with which these two cities were oppressed while subject to Perugia, have met with ample retribution since the latter fell under the Papal Sovereignty.

[7] Assissi, or Ascessi, one of the most picturesque and beautiful spots in Italy, was the sanctuary of early Italian art, and the scene of the triumphs of Giotto, to which Dante has given immortality.—*Purgatorio*, xi. 95. But its chief celebrity is derived from its having been the birth-place of St. Francis. The future Saint was named John at his baptism, but afterwards received the name

Unto the world a sun, with light increased, 50

of Francis, from his ready acquirement and use of the French language, which in early life he had occasion for in his father's trade with France. In a war between Assissi and Perugia, he was made prisoner, and continued a whole year in captivity. His father, with whom for a time he was a partner in business, was grieved and provoked by the reckless imprudence with which he *gave away* their goods. Although a layman, he was in the habit of preaching in the church belonging to the Convent of St. Damian, without the walls of Assissi. Thither his father, on one occasion, followed him, and insisted that he should either return home, or renounce all share in his inheritance and all expectation from his family. He went accordingly with his father before the Bishop of Assissi, and made a formal and legal renunciation of his inheritance, A.D. 1206. Hearing one day from the Gospel (read in some old Missals on the Feast of St. Matthias Feb. 24) *Matt.* x. 9, 10, "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses," &c., in a literal obedience to the text he gave away his money, and leaving off his shoes, leather girdle, and staff, contented himself with one poor coat, which he girt with a cord. It was the dress of the poor shepherds and peasants of that country. To this he added a short cloak to cover the shoulders, and a capuche or hood, for the head. This was the habit he gave to his first two companions or disciples, August 16, 1209. Pope Innocent verbally approved his rule in 1210, and ordained him deacon. He was never ordained priest. His rule allowed no dominion or property of temporal goods to be vested in his order, or any convent or community in it. The spirit of holy poverty he regarded as the foundation of his order. In 1215, Count Orlando of Catona, gave him an agreeable place of retreat in Mount Alverno, a part of the Apennines near Camaldoli and Vallombrosa, and built a church for the order. The Saint was much delighted with the seclusion on that high mountain. Here, his biographers tell us, he saw the Crucifix borne by a seraph, and his body received its impression, while his soul was filled with seraphic ardour. His hands and feet were pierced through; hard flesh, round and black, like the heads of nails, was seen on his hands and feet,

Like this when rising up from Ganges' bourn,[1]

and on the other side the points appeared as if clenched with a hammer. From a wound in his *right* side blood issued and stained his raiment. To explain this miracle, related by St. Bonaventure, Francis de Sales affirms, that the seraph, or Christ himself, by darting bright piercing rays from his wounds, really imprinted these on his body, as love had already impressed them on his soul. There is no saying to what extent the fanaticism of the master may have extended in *producing* these appearances, when that of the scholar could record them as miraculous, and millions of devotees believe in their supernatural character. But to silence all incredulity, Alban Butler states that "Blood from his side is kept in the cathedral at Recanati!" The miracle was also attested in 1237, by a bull of Gregory IX.: and Benedict XI. in 1304 instituted a festival and office in memory of them, which by other popes were enjoined on the whole Church. The Breviary authenticates these stigmata, ascribing them to "the finger of the living God!" Sept. 17th, Lectio iv., v., vi. He called Poverty his lady, spouse, and queen. He survived his vision two years, foretold his death, and earnestly requested that his body might be buried at the common place of execution, among those of malefactors, on the hill called Coll d' Inferno, then without the walls of Assisi. He died in the forty-fifth year of his age, October 12, A.D. 1226. He was canonized by Gregory IX. in 1228, and in 1230 a magnificent church was built on the Coll d' Inferno, changed to Paradiso, and his remains translated thither. His tomb of travertine, in a subterranean church of the Sagro Convento, was opened in 1818, and again closed on his remains. It is supported by the solid rock, which was left standing for the purpose, when the church was excavated around it. The establishment, and the circumstances of those who occupy it, offer a striking contrast to the poverty and humility inculcated and practised by the founder.

[1] When the sun has passed the Vernal Equinox, his rising is in the direction of India. St. Bonaventure, in his Life of St. Francis, appropriates to him the words of St. John, "I saw another angel ascending out of the East," &c.

Therefore let those who name the place, at least
Not say Assissi, which would wrong its worth,
But call it, properly to speak, 'The East.'[1]
Not many years pass'd o'er him from his birth,
Before his virtue, great and singular,
Began to give some comfort to the earth.
In youth, against his father's wish at war,
Courting a lady, for whose entrance more
Than Death, the gates of pleasure none unbar:
Before the Spiritual Court, before
His father, he to her made marriage vows,
Towards whom increasing love each day he bore.
This lady, when deprived of her first spouse,
Till he came, while twelve hundred years roll'd round,
Despised, obscure, unsought, would none espouse.
Nought reck'd they that she was by Cæsar found
Secure with Amyclas, though all beside
When he had spoken trembled at the sound.[2]
Nor aught avail'd her constancy when tried
So fiercely, that below when Mary stood,
She climb'd the cross and did with Christ abide.
But that I may be better understood,

[1] "But soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the East, and Juliet is the sun."

SHAKSPEARE, *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 2.

[2] Lucan, having described how Cæsar came by night and knocked repeatedly at the cottage-door of Amyclas the fisherman, to row him in his boat across the Adriatic, from Dyrrachium into Italy, exclaims; "O secure privilege of a poor life, and a straightened home! O gifts of the gods as yet not understood! To what temples or what strong walls could it happen, not to tremble when Cæsar's hand was knocking.—*Phars.* v. 527—530. Dante again alludes to this passage in his *Convito*.

Francis and Poverty this loving pair
You may from this my talk diffuse conclude.
Their concord, the blithe aspect which they wear,
Love, wonder, and the sweet regards they show,
Make other minds in holy thoughts to share.
This made the venerable Bernard[1] go
First with bare feet, and such great peace pursue
With speed, yet speeding thought himself but slow.
O unknown riches! lasting bliss and true![2]
Their feet Egidius[3] and Sylvester bare,
Following the Bridegroom, so the Bride pleased too.
Thus did that chief and father onward fare
With his espoused, and with that family
Bound with the humble cord[4] which now they wear.
Nor with a dastard shame his eyes lower'd he
For being Peter Bernadone's son,[5]

[1] Bernard of Quintavalle, a rich tradesman and magistrate of Assisi, was his first disciple; having entertained him at his house, he so admired his piety and humility that he begged to be made his companion, which being granted, he sold all his goods, and at once gave the proceeds to the poor.

[2] See note on line 69.

[3] Egidius (Giles), a third companion of St. Francis (Peter of Catania being the second), was a native of Assisi; he accompanied the Saint into the March of Ancona, and made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, whither he was sent by him to preach to the Saracens; but, on their threats of raising a persecution, he returned to Italy; and died at Perugia, A.D. 1272, or according to some, 1262.

[4] The principal error of St. Francis was the error of his time, and one which prevailed for many centuries; the undervaluing and degradation of the body. Hence it is said the cord with which he bound it was in sign that he considered it a beast, which required coercion.—See *Inferno*, xvi. 106—8.

[5] He is said to have been a wool-merchant.

Nor for his garb, though scouted wondrously.
But when that he to Innocent[1] had gone,
And his hard purpose[2] open'd royally,
From him the seal he for his order won.
When the poor flock increased exceedingly[3]
That follow'd him, whose wondrous life if scann'd
Would in Heaven's light be sung more worthily.
For the strict rules which he did for his band write,
Honorius, by the Eternal Spirit, erst
A second crown gave to this Archimandrite.[4]
And then, as though for martyrdom athirst,
In the proud Soldan's presence[5] he amain
Preach'd Christ and those who follow'd him at first.
Finding that race unripe to entertain
The Gospel yet, not idle there to be,

[1] Pope Innocent III.

[2] The harsh and severe rule of the order which he intended to found.

[3] In 1219, ten years after its institution, St. Francis held near Assissi a chapter of his order, at which five thousand friars were present, though many remained at home in their convents from inability to attend.

[4] Having revised his rule and presented it to Honorius III., who confirmed it by a bull dated November 29, 1221, he obtained in 1223 a confirmation of the famous indulgence granted a short time before to the little Church of Portiuncula, his favorite place of devotion, about a mile from Assissi.

[5] In 1219 he sailed with his brother Illuminatus to Egypt, where he joined the Christian army of the sixth Crusade, then besieging Damietta. In his great zeal for the conversion of the Saracens, he attempted to visit their camp, and was seized and brought before the Soldan of Egypt, Meledin, and asked his errand. He replied, "I am sent by the Most High, to show to you and your people the way of salvation, by announcing to you the truth of the Gospel." After some days, the Soldan, respect-

He came for fruit back to the Italian plain.
Between the Tiber and the Arno, he
On the hard rock[1] received Christ's final seal,
Which for two years his limbs bore visibly.[2]
When He who had ordain'd him so much weal
Was pleased to take him up to that reward
Which he had merited[3] by lowly zeal,
His dearest lady left he as a ward
To his companions, now his heirs by right,
And bade them yield her love and true regard.[4]
And from her bosom would he take his flight,
The soul illustrious, bound for its own realm,

ing his zeal and sincerity, sent him back, escorted by a strong guard, to the Christian camp before Damietta, from whence he returned by Palestine into Italy.

[1] The rough mountain of Alverna or Spur of the Apennines, near Chiusi in Casentino.

[2] The stigmata, or impression of Christ's wounds. See l. 49, note.

[3] That man cannot *merit* anything from the Almighty, in the sense of strict desert, or of rendering Him an equivalent for the blessing received or expected, is so certain and obvious, as hardly to have needed South's elaborate argument to prove it.—Sermon on *Job* xxii. 2. But as God's promises of spiritual and eternal blessings, which his grace and goodness induced him to make, are for the most part conditional, they who fulfil the evangelical conditions, and only they, may claim and expect the blessings promised, on the ground of the Divine veracity. *In this sense*, the word merit has been used as equivalent with "worthiness." See *Luke* xx. 35; 1 *John* i. 9; *Rev.* iii. 4; xxii. 14.

[4] St. Francis, a little before his death, dictated his testament to his brethren, in which he enjoins on them poverty, diligence, and obedience, and then desiring a song of thanksgiving, which he had composed, to be sung, he insisted on being laid on the ground, and covered with an old garment. In this position he continued to exhort, and gave them his last benediction.

And for his body wish'd no other site.[1]
Think now what colleague ought to hold the helm
Of Peter's bark with him, when on her way
O'er the high seas which threaten'd to o'erwhelm:[2]
Such colleague was our Patriarch, so that they
Who follow him as he has bid them do,
Good merchandise, thou seest, on board her lay.
But now his flock to range in pastures new
Have grown so eager and become so bold,
That they through forests wide their way pursue;
And as they ramble on the pathless wold,
The further off they go from him away,
With less of milk they come back to the fold.
Yet some there are who fearing much to stray,
Cleave to the Shepherd; but so few that course
Hold, little cloth would them in cloaks array.
Now if in speaking I have not been hoarse,
And if in hearing thou hast been attent;
If thou but call to memory my discourse,
In part thy wish will have received content.[3]
For thou the plant whence they are split hast found,[4]
And thou wilt see what my late censure meant,
'Where well they fatten, if not grown unsound.'"

[1] He wished no other sepulture than the bare earth.

[2] St. Thomas Aquinas, who here speaks, says that St. Dominic was worthy to be the compeer and associate of St. Francis in reforming and guiding the vessel of the Church. St. Dominic and St. Francis, in 1215, had frequent conferences at Rome, and desired to establish a close and perpetual friendship and coöperation between their two orders.

[3] One of the two difficulties mentioned in lines 25, 26, is solved; the solution of the other will appear in Canto xiii.

[4] "Thou wilt see how the Dominicans, for the most part, have deviated from the rule and example of their founder."

CANTO XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The songs and festal movements of the various blessed splendours. A second circle of glorified souls encompasses the first. Bonaventure, who is one of them, relates the story of St. Dominic, and complains of the degeneracy of his own order, the Franciscans. He names the other spirits belonging to that circle, Illuminato, Agostin, Hugo St. Victor, Pietro Mangiadore, Peter of Spain, the prophet Nathan, Chrysostom, Anselm, Donatus, Raban, and the prophetic abbot Joachim.

Soon as the holy flame[1] had made conclusion
Of what in words it purposed to expound,
The sacred wheel[2] commenced its revolution;
And had not yet whirl'd once entirely round,
Before another wheel[3] did in my sight
With answering step and song the first surround:
Song which from those sweet-sounding trumpets quite
Our Muses and our Sirens too outwent,
As much as primal doth reflected light.[4]
As when two bows on the soft cloud are bent,
Which parallel have the same hues put on,

[1] St. Thomas Aquinas.

[2] "*Molu*," a mill. He compares the revolving circle to the circular motion of a mill.

[3] "As it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel."—*Ezek.* i. 16.

[4] As much as a sunbeam exceeds in brilliancy its reflection from glass or water.

When Juno's handmaid[1] has by her been sent,
The outer arch born from the inner one,[2]
And like the vague nymph Echo's resonant speech,[3]
Whom love consumed, as mists are by the sun,[4]
They, through God's covenant made with Noah, teach
Mankind, presaging from the sign display'd,
No more the waves to drown the world will reach.[5]

[1] Iris, one of the Oceanides, or sea nymphs, perhaps from ειρω, to speak or tell.—See *Purg.* xxi. 50, note.

[2] The Natural Philosophy of Dante's time, in this, as in many other instances, was at fault. The primary and secondary rainbows are both produced by the rays of the sun shining directly on the drops of rain or vapour; but in the primary or inner one, the sunbeam refracted on entering and leaving each drop, is reflected but *once;* in the secondary or outer one, the ray is reflected *twice*, and hence the effect is weakened, the colours are fainter, and in a reversed order.

[3] "Resonabilis Echo."—Ovid, *Metam.* iii. 358.

[4] Echo, an Oread, or Nymph of the Mountains, attendant on Juno, whom she angered by having occupied her attention with talking, while Jupiter pursued his amour with Liriope. Juno, on detecting the stratagem, punished her by depriving her of the use of speech, except in short replies to other voices. Afterwards falling in love with Narcissus, and being slighted by him, she pined away, and was changed into a rock, retaining, however, the power of speaking in reply. A large smooth perpendicular surface of rock or building, at a certain distance from and opposite to the speaker, will return an echo, which seems like another voice replying. This fact not only explains the fable, but perhaps also the tradition that a ghost is silent until first spoken to. The misfortune of Narcissus (*Inferno* xxx 129, and note) was the retribution of Nemesis for the slight which made Echo pine to death.—Ovid, *Metam.* iii. 354—398.

[5] *Genesis* ix, 9—17.

"Like rainbows which Jupiter places in the clouds,
A sign to men." Homer, *Iliad*, xi. 27, 28.

These garlands twain, whose roses never fade,
That form'd the outer and the inner band,
In concert thus their circuit round us made.
After this dance and other joyance grand,
Both as to song and dazzling spectacle,
With light on light, so jubilant and bland,
With one accord they all at once were still,
Even as the eyes whose motion is the same,
To shut and open at the mover's will.
From one of the new lights[1] a voice there came,
As from its heart, and turning to find where,
Like needle to the pole-star I became.[2]
And he commenced; "The love that makes me fair[3]

[1] The second circle of splendours by which the first was surrounded; lines 3—6. These "New Lights" were the Souls of Franciscan monks. "There is nothing new under the sun," whatever there may be *above* it. In *our* world, many an old thing is mistaken for new by those who have scanty knowledge of the ages past.

[2] "As turns the needle trembling to the pole
It ne'er can reach,—so turns to you my soul."
BYRON.

[3] St. Bonaventure, called the Seraphic Doctor, was born at Bagnarea or Bagnoreggio, in Tuscany, A.D. 1221. He entered the Franciscan order in 1233, and studied in the University of Paris, where he afterwards taught Theology, and took the Doctor's degree with T. Aquinas in 1255. Next year he was elected General of his Order, in which he effected some reformation, and was made a Cardinal by Gregory X. in 1272. He assisted at the General Council of Lyons, in its first session, A.D. 1279, and died before it was ended, on the 15th July of the same year. In his numerous works he displayed both learning and piety.—DU PIN, *Ch. Hist.* iii. 230.

He was christened John, but afterwards, in his fourth year, when he was dangerously ill, his mother entreated St. Francis,

Now prompts me of another chief to tell,
Worthy with my own leader[1] to compare,
Whom we just now heard spoken of so well:
That as in war each fill'd an equal post,
So should their bright renown be parallel.
Christ's army, whom he at so dear a cost
Reärm'd, his banner following, had grown
A weary, worn, distrustful, scanty host,
When the great king who ever fills the throne,
For his imperill'd warriors did provide,

then near the end of his career, for his prayers on behalf of her sick son. The Saint foreseeing not only the recovery of the child, but his future fame, exclaimed "*O buona ventura!*" whence the name was given him by which he is now known. He died in the fifty-third year of his age, and was canonized by Sixtus IV. in 1482.

Bonaventure's predecessor, John of Parma, recalled the *Spiritual* from exile, entered warmly into their views, and enforced on his monks a strict and literal obedience to the Rule of their founder. Bonaventure, to prevent an open schism, steered a middle course, but without much success. Those who were for the *mild* interpretation given by Innocent IV. obtained its renewal in 1247 from Alexander IV. But the advocates of the *drastic* remedy for worldliness so far prevailed that, in an assembly of the order in 1260, the mild explication of Innocent was abrogated and annulled. Bonaventure, in a letter still extant, has himself described the lamentable divisions which thus early reigned among the monks of this famous order.

Clement IV. in 1265, nominated Bonaventure to the Archbishoprick of York. It is to the Saint's honour that his *Nolo episcopari* was not only sincere, but so forcibly urged, that he obtained from his holiness an exemption from compliance. He was afterwards nominated bishop of Albano, and ordained by Pope Gregory X.'s own hands.

[1] St. Francis.

Not for their merit, but his grace alone.
And, as I said, for succour to his bride,
Two champions gave,[1] by whom with deed and word,
To re-collect the people scatter'd wide.
In that part where sweet Zephyr[2] doth accord
Fresh foliage, springing in the opening year,
Which doth to Europe her new vest afford;
Not far from where the dashing waves, in rear[3]
Of which the sun sometimes o'er that long waste,
Conceal'd from all men ceases to appear;[4]

[1] In the thirteenth century the Mendicant orders were instituted. The monastic orders generally, abounding in the accumulated wealth with which from time to time they had been endowed, were sunk in indolence and sensuality. Their licentiousness was in striking contrast with that voluntary poverty of the sects who were hostile to the Church, which had gained for them a prodigious influence over the multitude. It was therefore necessary to introduce into the Church a set of men who in the austerity of their manners and their contempt of riches, should rival the leaders of the heretical sects, and win back to the Church the credit she had lost; for the Papacy will allow of no living Saintship except under her own direction and authority! Hence the Mendicant orders were established under the auspices of Innocent III. and his successors. Of these the Franciscans and Dominicans were the most popular and renowned; the Carmelites and Augustinians less so. Machiavelli says;— "As to sects, it is seen that these renovations are necessary, by the example of our religion, which had it not been brought back towards its principle by St. Francis and St. Dominic, would be entirely extinguished."—1st *Decade of Livy*, iii. c. 1.

[2] The west wind.

[3] In Spain, and not far from the western shore on which the Atlantic Ocean beats.

[4] Behind which the Sun sets during the Summer Solstice.

There fortunate is Callaroga[1] placed,
Under protection of the mighty shield,
Which shows one lion raised and one abased.[2]
There was the lover born who took the field
Knight of Christ's faith, the athlete sanctified,
Kind to her friends, to her opponents steel'd.[3]
His mind in its creation was supplied
With living power, he then the truth foreshow'd,
And ere his birth his mother prophesied.[4]
When to the sacred font for spousals vow'd
Betwixt him and the Christian faith, he went
Where they with mutual safety were endow'd;
The lady sponsor who gave his assent
Saw in a dream the wondrous fruit which he

[1] Anciently Calagurris, a city of the Vascones, now Calahorra on the Ebro. Dante describes its position in respect to Italy; —in the West, about 70 miles from the Bay of Biscay, beyond which, in summer, the sun is seen by the Italians to set. Calahorra is within the limits of Old Castile.

[2] In the arms of Castile and Leon are two Lions and two Castles; on the dexter side of the shield the Castle is quartered above the Lion, and on the sinister side the Lion is above the Castle.

[3] Shakespeare says of Wolsey, that he was—

"Lofty and sour to them that loved him not;
But, to those men that sought him, sweet as summer."

King Henry VIII. act iv. sc. 2.

[4] St. Dominic was born A.D. 1170, of the illustrious house of the Guzmans. Before his birth his mother dreamt that she brought forth a black whelp, with a burning torch in its mouth, which set the world on fire. This was afterwards deemed prophetic of the black habit of his order, and his burning zeal in propagating the faith. The omen was appropriate; it foreshadowed the Black Friars, and the torch of the Inquisition, which was committed to their guardianship.

And his true heirs would to the world present.[1]
And then to intimate what he would be,
She thence was by the Spirit moved to name him
From Him whose Lordship held him totally;
They call'd him Dominic,[2] and I proclaim him
As that accomplish'd husbandman whom CHRIST
For his assistant chose: it well became him
To be the messenger and friend of CHRIST,
For the first love made manifest as his
Was love to that first counsel given by CHRIST.[3]
Oft times, when silent and awake, submiss
On the bare earth he by his nurse was found,
As if he said, 'Lo, I am come for this.'[4]
O father Felix, name of happy sound!
O thou his mother, truly call'd Joanna,[5]
If, as they say, thy name we well expound!
Like those he toil'd not who for Earth's hosanna

[1] His godmother dreamed that he had one star on his forehead and another in the nape of his neck, from which he shed light on the East and the West.

[2] Dominicus, the adjective of possession formed from *Dominus*, a lord. This name is said to have been given him by a noble matron who stood sponsor at his baptism.

[3] *Matt.* xix. 21. This was *not* the first precept given by Christ, either in the order of time or of importance; nor was it a general precept, nor from its nature could it be so; for if every one sold his possessions to give away the price, where would be the *buyers?* The precept was given to an individual.

Whenever Dante introduces the name of CHRIST as a rhyme, deeming no other word worthy to be matched with it, he shows his reverence for it by this triple repetition, which occurs four times in *Paradiso*.

[4] "I am set apart for prayer and mortification."

[5] In Hebrew, "The Grace or Gift of God."

Now follow Taddeo's[1] and Ostiense's[2] trail,
But for his love of the true hidden manna.
As a sage doctor soon his powers avail
To watch the vineyard and secure the vine,
Which quickly withers if the dresser fail.
And from the Seat[3] which once was more benign
To the just poor (not thence the scandal is,
But through its occupant, now grown malign); 90
No grant of two or three for six, not his,[4] [wants,
Nor tithes which should supply God's poor their
Nor chance of the first vacant benefice,[5]
Demanded he; but he for licence pants
To fight the erring world for that good seed[6]
Whence sprung what binds the four and twenty plants.[7]
Then joining doctrine with heroic deed,
In office apostolical did he,
Like torrent sprung from some high source, proceed,
And struck against the roots of heresy. 100

[1] A commentator on the Decretals, named Arrigo, a native of Susa, in Piedmont, and Cardinal of Ostia and Velletri, whence he acquired the name Ostiense.

[2] There were two of this name—one an eminent Florentine physician, who translated the Ethics of Aristotle into Latin; the other of Bologna, celebrated for his legal knowledge.

[3] The Papal Chair, or See of Rome.

[4] He did not ask licence to compound for unjust acquisitions, by devoting a third or half to pious uses.

[5] The reversion of a benefice, with the chance of its being a rich or poor one.

[6] The good seed is Divine Truth, or the Word of God, the only true bond of Christian union.

[7] The two garlands of blessed souls, twelve in each; namely, the Theologians of the Church, who base their doctrines on the 24 Books of Holy Scripture.—See *Purg.* xxix. 83, note.

Where greatest the resistance was, his blows
Fell with the most impetuosity.[1]
And many a rill, from him descended, flows,
Watering the Catholic garden wide and far,
So that each bush with fresher verdure shows.
If such was one wheel of the sacred car[2]
In which the Holy Church is now defended,
And conquers in the field of civil war,
By thee more plainly may be comprehended
That other's virtuous excellence whom Thomas,
Before I came, so courteously commended.[3]
But the tracks made of old, so full of promise,

[1] St. Dominic was a great preacher, and the conversion of many heretics in Languedoc is reckoned among the miracles which entitled him to canonization. But when it is related that of their co-religionists 10,000 had recently been cut in pieces in the province of Berri by King Philip Augustus, the conversions wrought by St. Dominic's eloquence, backed by such an *ultima ratio*, will not appear miraculous. He was appointed head of the Mission by Innocent III., and when the army of the crusade approached he joined it, and by his prediction of its success encouraged its ferocious commander, Simon de Montfort, in his war of extermination against the hapless Albigenses. In 1215 he founded his religious order of Preaching Friars. To these he prescribed rigorous fasting and perpetual abstinence from animal food, the most severe poverty, and a close application to sacred studies and ecclesiastical duties, especially preaching. He obtained the sanction of Innocent III. to his institute, and assisted at the Council of Lateran.—See Canto x. 95, note.

[2] See *Purgatorio* xxix. and xxx.

[3] St. Francis and St. Dominic are here described as the two wheels of the sacred car. By mutual courtesy, Bonaventure, a Franciscan, proclaims the praise of St. Dominic, as T. Aquinas, Dominican, had celebrated those of St. Francis; but each blames the degeneracy, not of the other's order, but of his own.

Are now deserted; mouldy grew anon[1]
The dregs, when that good wine was taken from us.
His family, that walk'd so straight upon
The footmarks left by him, so turn'd aside,
Instead of onward they have backward gone.[2]
And soon the reaping season will betide
Of that bad husbandry; the darnel then
Will wail to find the barn to them denied.[3]
I boldly say, Whoe'er with sharpest ken
Will search our volume leaf by leaf, may see,[4]
'I am as I was wont'[5] writ by some pen.
Not from Casál nor Aquaspart[6] will be

[1] "Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mingled with water." —*Isaiah* i. 22.

[2] The religious orders, though not allowing any one monk to possess property, had large possessions belonging to the community of each separate order; and out of their common property and revenues every one was furnished with subsistence. But St. Francis prohibited both separate and collective property to the monks of his order. After his death many of them took the liberty to dispense with his injunction. In this they were sanctioned by Gregory IX., who in 1231 published an interpretation of the rule considerably mitigating its excessive rigour. The controversy proceeded, as described in the note, line 31. Many of the *spiritual* retired into woods and deserts, and others were apprehended by Cresentius, general of the order, and sent into exile. It is evident they had the sympathy of Dante.

[3] See *Matt.* xiii. 30.

[4] The volume is the Franciscan order; the leaves, the individual friars.

[5] "I observe the rule faithfully, as I and my predecessors have been accustomed."

[6] In the dispute between the two parties of Franciscans, John XXII. called into his counsel Ubertino di Casale, the patron of the Spiritual Franciscans, and decided in their favour; this did

Found such as I portray; but those who venture,
One to relax the rule, and one to bind.
I am the living soul of Bonaventure,
Of Bagnoreggio,[1] whose high functions e'er
Made me despise each sinister adventure.[2]
Illuminato and Agostin[3] here
Were, with the first of my barefooted poor,
Rank'd with the friends of God the cord who wear;
Hugo of Sanvittorè[4] is one more;
And Pietro Mangiadór,[5] and Spanish Peter,[6]
Who in twelve books below display'd his lore;

not end the controversy, and he afterwards denounced them as heretics.—MOSHEIM, cent. xiv. part ii. ch. ii.

Cardinal Acquasparte was general of the order, and favoured the more lax interpretation of the rule.

[1] Now Bagnarea, a small city on the right bank of the Tiber, between Orvieto and Viterbo.

[2] He preferred things divine to secular interests and honours.

[3] Two of St. Francis's earliest followers.

[4] Of the monastery of St. Victor in Paris. He was distinguished by the fertility of his genius, and versed in all the branches of sacred and profane learning of his time. His writings are voluminous. He died A.D. 1142, at the age of 44. His brother Richard is mentioned Canto x. 131.

[5] Latinized into Petrus Comestor (Eater), born at Troyes, was Canon and Dean of the Church at Paris, but renounced these benefices to become a Canon regular of St. Victor at Paris, where he died in 1198. His best-known work is his *Historia Scholastica*.

[6] Born in Lisbon (Portugal being then a part of Spain), and was elected Pope A.D. 1276; a man of considerable genius and acquirements, as his books, written in the name of Peter of Spain, testify. After a reign of little more than eight months, he was, in 1277, killed by the falling in of the roof of a new built chamber in his palace at Viterbo.

Nathan the Prophet;[1] and Chrysostom,[2] sweeter
Than honey; Anselm,[3] and Donatus,[4] we
To handle the first art think none was meeter.

[1] David's faithful reprover; 2 *Sam.* vii. 2—17; xii. 1—15.

[2] John, surnamed Chrysostom (*Golden Mouth*) on account of his extraordinary eloquence, born at Antioch, about A.D. 354, where he became a popular preacher, and was then made Patriarch of Constantinople. His vigorous efforts to reform the Church made him enemies, his faithful reproofs of the Court awakened the resentment of Eudoxia, consort of the Emperor Arcadius, and his generous and humane hospitality to certain monks banished by John, Patriarch of Alexandria, awoke against him the inextinguishable hatred of that unworthy prelate. Their machinations caused his deposition and banishment to Asia Minor, where he spent three years in the midst of war, pestilence, and famine. He possessed a sublime genius and extensive erudition, and was the most eloquent and sensible of the Greek fathers. He was magnanimous, generous, and liberal almost to excess. His irritability gave his enemies an advantage over him. In his expositions of Scripture he discarded the fanciful method which Origen's example had rendered popular, and adhered to the literal and historical sense.

[3] Born at Aosta, in Sardinia, about A.D. 1034, Abbot of St. Stephen's, of Caen, in Normandy, and was called thence, on the death of Lanfranc, in 1093, to the See of Canterbury by William the Conqueror. Deeply versed in Logic and Metaphysics, he was eminent for his moral treatises and his able championship of Christianity against infidel opponents, and was the first of the Latin Doctors who either did justice to the important science of *Natural Theology*, or composed a system of Theology.

[4] Ælius Donatus, a grammarian in the fourth century, born A.D. 333; the preceptor of Jerome, who speaks highly of his talents, and of his valuable commentary on Terence. His elementary treatise was the basis of all subsequent works on *Latin Grammar*, called "the first art," because it is the key which unlocks the temple of science and discovers truth to the mind.

Raban[1] is here; and bright beside me see
That abbot of Calabria, Joachim,[2]
Endow'd with rare prophetic spirit he.
The praise of such a paladin[3] to hymn,
What moved me was the glowing courtesy
Of brother Thomas; that good speech by him
Charm'd me, and also all this company."

[1] Rabanus Maurus, Abbot of Fulda, made Archbishop of Mentz in 847. He was renowned through Germany and France for his learning, and zeal for the sciences. The young flocked to him from all parts to receive instruction. The fire of his genius, the extent of his knowledge, and the multitude of his works, placed him at the head of all the Latin writers of his day. He opposed the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, when first propounded by the monk Paschasius Radbert, and the Augustinian doctrine of absolute *predestination*, when revived by Godeschalus.

[2] "The Abbot of Flora," says Dupin, "having in his books advanced several propositions against the vices and immoralities of his time, and exhorted men to aspire to greater perfection than was generally practised, some took occasion from thence to believe that the Christian Dispensation would soon have an end, and that the Dispensation of the Spirit, a great deal more perfect, would succeed. This doctrine spread among many devout people. By one of them a book was written to establish it, entitled *The Everlasting Gospel*. It was committed to the flames in 1256, by Pope Alexander IV., and the Council of Arles condemned the errors of those disciples of Joachim and the books he had published."—Dupin, *Ecc. Hist.* cent. xiii. ch. v. The sentiments ascribed to the Abbot Joachim were generally adopted by the *spiritual* party among the Franciscans. We have seen that Dante leaned to this party, and was impartial in praising those whom he believed to be good men. We verily believe he would have praised Wicliffe (as Chaucer did) and Luther, if he had not died before either of them was born!

[3] This may apply either to Dominic or Joachim. The ambiguity was convenient, and perhaps intentional.

CANTO XIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

St. Thomas Aquinas resolves the second of Dante's doubts: he praises the wisdom of Solomon; and censures the folly and rashness of those who from partial evidence deduce unsound or uncharitable conclusions.

Let him imagine, who desires to know
What now I saw, and let its image stay
Fix'd as in marble, while the scene I show,
The fifteen stars in various tracts where they
Enliven heaven,[1] and from the deep serene
Through the dense air transmit their lucid ray.
The northern wain[2] imagine, for whose sheen

[1] Not more than fifteen or sixteen stars of the first magnitude, without reckoning those in Ursa Major, are visible in Europe in the course of the year. Their names, and the constellations to which they belong, are the following:—Aldebaran, in Taurus; Alpherat, in Hercules; Arcturus, in Boötes; Atair, in Aquila; Beltigeux, in Orion; Capella, in Auriga; Deneb, in Cygnus; Fomahault, in the Southern Fishes; Pollux, in Gemini; Procyon, in Canis Minor; Regulus, in Leo; Rigel, in Orion; Sirius, in Canis Major; Spica, in Virgo; and Vega (or Lucida Lyra), in Lyra. If we omit Fomahault, which belongs to the southern hemisphere, and never mounts far above our horizon, the number will exactly coincide with Dante's—

"Quindici stelle che in diverse piage
Lo cielo avvivan di tanto sereno,
Che soverchia dell'aere ogni compage."

[2] In Ursa Major there are seven principal stars—Dubhe, of the first magnitude, three others of the second, and three of the third.

Our sky suffices both by night and day,
And, circling ever, ne'er to set is seen.[1]
The mouth imagine of that horn of light[2]
Sprung from the axle's point round which the wheel,
The primal, furthest heaven performs its flight;
And to have form'd, for their celestial reel,
Two signs like that which Minos' daughter made
In heaven,[3] when doom'd the ice of death to feel;

[1] The Great Bear never sets beneath our horizon.

[2] To the fifteen stars of the first magnitude and the seven stars of Ursa Major, the poet adds those two stars of Ursa Minor which he calls its horn: these are δ of the third magnitude, and the Pole Star of the second. "The mouth" of a "horn" is an orientalism, of which we have a still bolder example in *Daniel* vii. 8:—"In this horn were eyes, and a mouth speaking great things."

[3] See *Inferno*, xii. 20, note. Theseus, having brought Ariadne as his wife to Naxos, abandoned her there. There she was wooed and won by Bacchus, who at her death placed among the stars the marriage-crown which he had placed upon her head. It consists of seven stars, Alphota of the second, four of the fourth, and two of the fifth magnitudes. Thus Ovid:

"The son of Ægeus, carrying off the daughter of Minos,
Set sail for Dia,* but on that shore deserted her cruelly;
When thus deserted and bitterly lamenting,
Bacchus brought her assistance and married her,
And that she might be famed by a lasting constellation,
The crown taken from her brow he placed in heaven;
It flies through the yielding air, and as it is flying
The jewels are suddenly changed into fires,
And they settle in their place, the form of a crown still remaining,
Which is the middle (constellation) resting on the knee
Of him who holds the Serpent."†—*Metam.* viii. 174—182.

* Naxos, one of the Cyclades. † Hercules.

And that the beams of both are so display'd
That in it one the other doth include,
One moving forward and one retrograde:
And he will have some faint similitude
Of those true constellations and their dance
Twofold that circled round me where I stood,[1]
Which did as much beyond our customs glance
As, swifter than Chiana's[2] waves decline,
Moves the swift heaven which doth all else advance.[3]
These chant not Bacchus, nor in pæans[4] join,
But hymn three persons in one Deity,
And that one Christ both human and divine.
Their song and dance thus finish'd joyfully,
On us those holy luminaries waited,
From charge to charge thus passing happily.
Midst those according saints now terminated
The silence, for that one of all the lights[5]
Who had to me the wondrous life narrated
Of that meek man of God,[6] said, "When alights

[1] In two concentric circles, moving horizontally but in opposite directions.

"Causing a circle to revolve within a circle.....the motion of the external circle that of sameness, that of the interior circle the motion of difference. He caused also the circle of sameness to revolve laterally towards the right, that of difference diagonally towards the left."—PLATO, *Timæus: Works*, vol. ii. 337–339. Bohn's Ed. 1849.

[2] A remarkably sluggish river—Horace's "Clanis"—which discharges its waters into the Paglio at Orvieto, not far from where the latter falls into the Tiber.

[3] The Primum Mobile.

[4] Pæan, a hymn in praise of Apollo.

[5] St. Thomas Aquinas.

[6] St. Francis.

The flail on one sheaf and the grain is stored,
To thresh the other out sweet love invites.[1]
Thou think'st of him who did the rib afford,
To form the cheek that cost the world so dear,
Through appetite that still must be deplored;
And then of Him once pierced by the rude spear,
Who for all time so fully satisfied,
That man's account for every fault is clear;
That both, as much as could in man reside,
Of heavenly light possess'd all plenitude,
From God the Fountain of all good supplied.
Therefore thou marvellest to have understood,
When I related that he had no second
Whose wondrous worth yon fifth light[2] doth include.
Now mark my answer: Know that I but beckon'd
To thy belief with my late speech, which I
Like central truth amid its circle reckon'd.
What never dies, and what is born to die,[3]
Is nought but that idea's radiancy,
The offspring of our loving Sire on high:
Because that living ray can never be
Disjoin'd from Him with whom its light begun,
Nor from the love of that United Three.
By his goodwill collected, of that Sun
The beams are mirror'd in nine substances,[4]
Itself eternally remaining One.

[1] Having solved one of Dante's two doubts (Canto x. 96, 114), he felt impelled by Charity to expound the other.

[2] The soul of Solomon.

[3] All created beings.

[4] The nine heavens and the nine orders of angels.—See Canto xxviii. 76, note.

Descending thence to lower powers than these,[1]
From sphere to sphere its failing rays proceed,
Till it makes nought but brief contingencies.
And I by these contingencies, indeed,
Intend things generated, which below
Heaven circling causes, with or without seed.
Their wax[2] is not like that which moulds it, so
Press'd by the seal in methods multifarious,
'Twill more or less the bright idea show;[3]
And hence on the same tree the bloom precarious,
After its kind, hath worse or better fruit,
And you are born with dispositions various.[4]
And did the wax the mould exactly suit,
Where Heaven its choicest virtues too assembles,
The seal's bright impress would be absolute.[5]

[1] See Canto ii. 123; *Purgatorio* xxviii. 117.

[2] The elemental part of nature.

[3] "There is an *idea*, unproduced and incapable of decay, receiving nothing extraneous, and never entering into any other nature, but invisible, and imperceptible to the senses, and only to be apprehended by pure intellect; while the second, which is like it, and bears the same name, is perceptible by the senses, an effect produced, ever in motion, coming into being in a definite place, and then hastening to decay."—PLATO'S *Timæus: Works*, vol. ii. p. 358.

[4] Thus in the *Convito*, Dante says—"The Divine goodness descends on all things, otherwise they could not exist; but although most simple in its commencement, it is differently received as it flows on, according to the capacity, power, and essence of each recipient."

[5] "The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave."
Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, iv. 25.

But Nature ever fails it,[1] and resembles
The artist who doth to his work apply
With art consummate, and a hand that trembles.
Therefore if ardent love and the clear eye
Dispose and stamp, the power of the Supreme
Complete perfection will thereto supply.[2]
Thus Adam's clay from that celestial beam
At first all animal perfection drew,
And thus did that pure Virgin Mother teem.
Hence thy opinion gains approval due,
That human nature yet has never been,
Nor will be what it has been in these two.[3]
Now, should my words no further go, I ween,
Thy question then would follow close at hand,
How is it that his peer was never seen?
But that the secret thou mayst understand,
Think who he was, and what he wish'd to gain,
And when bid 'Ask,' what prompted his demand.[4]
I have not spoken darkly, but made plain,
That he, a king, ask'd wisdom, so that he
Might as a king be render'd fit to reign.

[1] The finite are the fallible; and the lapse of our first parents deprived their posterity of that moral, mental, and physical perfection which they might otherwise have inherited.

[2] Bagioli thinks that by the Power Supreme is meant the Father; by the Clear Eye, Wisdom, the Word, or Son; and by Ardent Love, the Holy Spirit.

[3] Adam and Christ, both of whom were made by the immediate power of God.

[4] "In that night did God appear to Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said unto God... ...Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may know how to go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this people that is so great?"—2 *Chron.* i. 7, 10.

Not what of angel powers the numbers be,[1]
To know; nor if necessity can e'er
Of the contingent make necessity;
How motion can originate; and where
Within the semicircle can be made
A triangle with no right angle there.
Hence, if attention to my words be paid,
In regal prudence he has had no peer,
And the shaft strikes the mark which I essay'd.
That word 'arisen'[2] may make my meaning clear,
Applied to kings alone, if thou see right,
Of which, though many, good ones few appear.
With this distinction take my words, which quite
With thy belief will then agreeing meet,
Of the first Father, and of our Delight.[3]
And be this ever lead unto thy feet
To make thy motion, like one wearied, slow,
And let thy 'No' and 'Yes' be more discreet.
For of all fools there is not one more low
Than he who rash to admit, or to reject,[4]
Without good reason answers 'Yes' and 'No.'[5]

[1] "How many are the movers of the celestial spheres? Or of two premises, if one is a necessary truth and the other a contingency, whether a necessary consequence can be deduced? Or if we may admit a first motion in nature" (as we decidedly must)? "Or if a triangle not right angled can be inscribed in a semicircle" (which is impossible)? These were among the popular puzzles of the scholastic age.

[2] See Canto x. 114.

[3] Adam and Jesus Christ. See note, line 87.

[4] "Distinguo," says Montaigne, "is the most universal member of logic."

[5] "Qui prius respondet quam audiat; stultum se esse demonstrat, et confusione dignum."—*Proverbs* xviii. 13, Vulg.

For current sentiments,[1] oft incorrect,
Will warp his judgment to the falser part,
And then self-love will blind his intellect.
Much more than vainly does his bark depart,
Since he returns not as he went away,
Who fishes for the truth unskill'd in art.[2]
This the world knows by proofs as clear as day;
Parmenides, Mellissus,[3] in such sort did,
And Brissus went, they knew not where, astray.
Sabellius, Arius,[4] and those fools reported,

[1] Popular prejudices.

[2] He returns with loss of his time and wearied with fruitless toil.

[3] Parmenides was a disciple of Xenophanes, the founder of the Eleatic sect of philosophy. He was a native of Elea, in Italy, where he was distinguished as a statesman, whose laws were long held in high esteem by his fellow-citizens. He visited Athens B. C. 448, in the 65th year of his age, accompanied by Zeno. There he became acquainted with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. He believed the universe to be eternal, spherical, and without motion in any direction; that the mind alone can apprehend the only reality, a ONE and ALL, a continuous and self-existing substance, which cannot be perceived by the senses; and that the phenomena of sense are delusive. Melissus, a native of Samos, was a disciple of Parmenides, and, like him, adopted the Eleatic philosophy. He is said to have had the command of a fleet, and to have gained a victory over the Athenians B.C. 444.

[4] Sabellius, an African Bishop or Presbyter, who, about the middle of the second century, taught that the Father alone is truly and properly Divine, and that the Son and the Holy Ghost are mere virtues or influences from him; and that the Father was united with the Man Christ (whom he also called the Son), and was born and crucified with him.

Arius was a Presbyter of Alexandria in the fourth century, who about A D. 318, in opposing the endeavours of Alexander, bishop

Who made the Scriptures grievous wrong endure,
Showing, like swords, their proper face distorted.[1]
In judging others then be not too sure;[2]
Like him who reckons in the field his corn,
Ere harvest time and ere it is mature.[3]
For I have seen, all winter through, the thorn
Prickly and stiff, but when the cold has past,
The blooming rose upon its top was borne.
And I have seen the ship, that sailing fast
Had made her prosperous voyage o'er the sea,
Perish just at the harbour's mouth at last.
Let no Dame Bertha or Sir Martin be,
Though one man steal and one give alms withal,
Quite sure that they the doom divine can see;
For that man yet may rise, and this may fall."[4]

of that city, to *explain* the doctrine of the Trinity, fell into the opposite error of denying it. He maintained the pre-existence of the Son as the first and noblest of created beings, the agent by whose subordinate operation God had created the universe, and that therefore he is inferior to the Father.

[1] They distort the Scriptures, as a polished sword when used as a mirror does the human face. Brocquière, a traveller who wrote before Dante's time, says that the wandering Arabs used their scimitars as mirrors.

[2] The saint, having removed the doubt respecting the final state of Solomon, Canto x. 111, takes occasion from thence to caution us against rash judgments concerning the future condition of others.

[3] Low people, who are usually the most censorious.

[4] Ezekiel reminds us that it is possible for the wicked to turn from his wickedness and live, and for the righteous to turn from his righteousness and die.—xviii. 26, 27. And the rude and rough, but gifted and sublime Tinker of Bedford, Calvinist as he was, has said that "there is a way to hell even from the gates of heaven!"

CANTO XIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Beatrice asks the encircling splendours if their present appearance will remain the same after the resurrection. The soul of Solomon replies. Beatrice and Dante ascend to the fifth heaven, which is the *Sphere of Mars*, the *Star of Valour*, where those abide who have engaged in warfare for the true faith. The surface of the planet appears divided by two furrows in the form of a cross, in which multitudes of shining forms move to and fro, singing a melodious hymn.

As from the centre to the rim and thence
Back to the centre, water in a vase
Moves, as the blow is given within its fence,
Or from without; such seem'd the present case.
For when of Aquinas the glorious flame
Was mute, the strict similitude I trace
Between his talk which from the circle came,
And that which at its centre Beatrice
Was pleased in these commencing words to frame:
"My comrade here needs, though he says not this
With speech, nor even in thought as yet, that he
The root should of another truth not miss.
Tell him, if that refulgence which we see
Enwreath your substance will, as it is now,
Remain with you the same eternally?
And if it so is to remain, say how

Then, when you shall be visibly remade,
Your sight such blaze uninjured can allow?"
As from the impulse of new joy display'd,
Oft in a ring the dancers trip along,
With voices raised and with a nimbler tread,
At this devout request that holy throng
Their new and glad contentment signify
In circling dance and admirable song.
If any mourn that they on earth must die
To live in heaven, they have not seen withal
Of that eternal shower the fresh supply.[1]
That One, and Two, and Three, original,[2]
That ever lives and reigns, the Triune Lord,
Not circumscribed, but circumscribing all,[3]
Three times was chanted with such sweet accord
By each one in that brisk tripudiáry,
As to all merit would be full reward.

[1] Death cannot be understood by us, till after it has been undergone; and when we consider how different from its present condition the disembodied state of the soul must be, it seems marvellous that with Christian faith and hope are not oftener associated an eager desire to realise the secrets of eternity, and the joys which are at God's right hand.

[2] Chaucer has literally translated this triplet—

"Thou Onè, Two, and Three, eterne on live,
That reignest aiè in Three, Two, and One,
Uncircumscript, and all maist circumscrive."

Troilus and Cresseide, v.

The Divine Trinity in Unity, the Divine and Human natures of Christ, and the coequality and unity of Christ with the Father.

[3] "There sits the Almighty, First of all and End,
Whom nothing but himself can comprehend."

COWLEY, *Davideis*, i. 363, 4.

Then heard I from the brightest luminary
Of the least circle speak one voice benign,[1]
Such as perhaps the angel's was to Mary.[2]
It said, "Long as the festival divine
Of Paradise shall last, so long our love
Will with such raiment round about us shine.
Its brightness with our fervour doth improve;
Our fervour, far as grace transcends our powers,
Is kindled by the vision seen above.[3]
And when revestured with that flesh of ours,
Holy and glorious, then made perfect, we
Shall bloom yet fairer in the immortal bowers;[4]
Because that light will be increased which He,
The Sovereign Good, has freely given us,—light
By which we are prepared His face to see.[5]
With vision thus made clearer, it is right
Such vision should our ardour more inflame,
And make the ray which thence proceeds more bright.
But as the kindled coal which gives out flame,
To exceed that flame in glowing white is found,
So that its form, though veil'd, is seen the same,
So the effulgence which now girds us round
Shall be surpass'd by our own flesh made bright,
Which now on earth lies buried underground.
Nor shall we be o'erpower'd with so much light,
For our corporeal organs then will be

[1] Solomon, "the most beautiful" of all the splendours in the inner and lesser circle.—Canto x. 109.

[2] *Luke* i. 28—37.

[3] The beatific vision of God.

[4] See *Inferno* vi. 103—111, and note.

[5] See *Col.* i. 12.

Strong to sustain whatever gives delight."[1]
Both choirs responded then so suddenly
And earnestly, that I in their "Amen"[2]
Their yearning for their bodies dead could see.
Not for themselves, but for their mothers then,
Their sires, perhaps, and others dear when they
Were not yet ceaseless flames, but mortal men.
And, lo! around them with an equal ray
A lustre sprung o'er that already there,[3]
Like the horizon brightening with new day.
And as the stars through the celestial sphere
Are newly seen when evening first commences,
Yet so that scarcely real they appear,
So now new substances on my rapt senses
Begin to loom, and sweeping round career it
Beyond the other two circumferences.
O true irradiance of the Holy Spirit![4]
With what a sudden brightness did it glow
To my o'ermastered sight, which scarce could bear it.
But Beatrice, in beauty smiling, so
Appear'd to me, that what was else in view

[1] "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power."—1 *Cor.* xv. 43.

[2] AMEN is a Hebrew word, from a root which signifies *to make steady*, and in a passive form *to be steady, stable, constant, settled, established, confirmed;* as a particle of affirmation or consent it signifies *It is true*, or *Be it so*. Its religious use has led to its adoption in almost all languages.

[3] In addition to the light of the two circles of glorified spirits, there now shines over and from beyond them the light of a third circle.

[4] From whose influence arises the love that makes them shine.

I leave, as things which memory will not show.
Mine eyes recover'd then their strength anew,
And looking up I found myself translated
To higher joy, sole with my lady too.
I knew that I had thus been elevated,
Because I saw the star, which smiling glow'd
With redder light than wont illuminated.
With all my heart, and with that speech to God
Which all alike may use, a sacrifice
I offer'd fitting this new grace bestow'd,
And from my bosom had not ceased to rise
The ardour of my incense[1] ere I knew
My service was accepted in the skies.
For now such splendour and such ruby hue
Appear'd within two glittering rays benign;
I cried, "O Helios,[2] beautiful and true!"
As greater stars and less their light combine
To blanch the milky way,[3] by sages found
A problem, as from pole to pole they shine;

[1] The inward aspiration of a grateful heart. See *Psalm* cxli. 2.

[2] A Greek word, the sun.—"The Sun of Righteousness" is intended.—*Mal.* iv. 2; *John* viii. 12.

[3] See *Inferno* xvii. 108, and note. Dante in his *Convito* speaks of the different opinions of philosophers respecting the Galaxy. "The Pythagoreans say that the sun once wandered out of his way, and passing through other parts not suited to his heat scorched the places through which he passed. Others, as Anaxagoras and Democritus, that the Galaxy is nothing but a multitude of fixed stars in that part, so small that we cannot here below distinguish them; but that from them appears that whiteness which we call the Galaxy; and it may be that the heaven in that part is more dense, and therefore retains and represents that light." This opinion is the one which Dante favours, and therein has shown his remarkable sagacity.

Thus constellated in the disc profound
  Of Mars, appear'd that sign most venerable,
  The junction of four quadrants in a round.[1]
Here memory better serves than aptest fable,
  For on the cross was brightly blazon'd CHRIST,
  Fitly to liken whom I am not able:
But who takes up his cross and follows CHRIST,
  Will pardon me what here I fail to trace,
  Seen on that tree, the flashing form of CHRIST.[2]
From horn to horn, and twixt the top and base,[3]
  The lights are seen with scintillation strong,
  Meeting and passing as they swiftly pace:
Thus we on earth see atoms glance along,
  Changing each instant, meeting or apart,
  Both swift and slow, a gay and glittering throng,
Move in the slanting ray straight or athwart,
  Edging the shade which men against the sun
  Contrive with ingenuity and art.
And as when lute and harp are tuned in one,
  Of many chords they make melodious jingle,
  The notes are heard, but we distinguish none,
Thus from the lights which there appear to mingle
  A hymn which, though unknown, quite ravish'd me,
  Gather'd along the Cross, most sweet and single.
High praises fill'd, I knew, that melody;

[1] A cross within a circle, thus ⊕. Dante places here the most renowned of those warriors who have fought in defence of the true faith.

[2] A remarkable instance of Dante's veneration for the name of Christ is, that he would not allow any other word to *rhyme* with it. See Canto xii. 75, and note.

[3] From the four extremities of the cross.

For these words reach'd me, "Rise and conquer Thou!"[1]
The sounds I heard; their sense was mystery.
So much they won upon me, I avow,
That nothing o'er me e'er the power possess'd
To hold in such sweet bonds as these did now.
Perhaps too daring seems what I've express'd,
As if those lovely eyes I could forget,
Gazing on which my eager wish finds rest.
But that the stamp those living seals have set[2]
Grows lovelier in ascending, he who knows,
And that to these I had not turn'd me yet,
Can well excuse me, who myself expose:
My true defence you see;[3] this verse of mine
Could not that holy pleasure all disclose,
Since as we mount it grows yet more divine.[4]

[1] Part of an ancient hymn in praise of Christ, the words quoted referring to his victorious and triumphant resurrection.—BIAGIOLI. See PLINY, *Epist.* lib. x. ep. 97; and *Purg.* xxxiii. 3, note.

[2] He supposes that things on earth receive the influence of the stars, as wax is impressed by the seal.

[3] The holy pleasure of beholding her. See *Purg.* xxxi. 117, and note.

"Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seem'd lighter from her eyes,
They were so soft, and beautiful, and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies;
And pure as Psychè ere she grew a wife,
Too pure even for the purest human ties,"
And therefore He who had that beauty given,
Took her to join the white-robed quire in Heaven.

BYRON, *plus the last two lines.*

[4] Dante's attention having, in his ascent, been arrested by the increasing beauty of the heavens, and especially of the glorious cross in the disc of Mars, he had not, since his arrival, noticed the corresponding beauty of Beatrice, which had been augmented in the same proportion.

CANTO XV.

THE ARGUMENT.

A star, which glides along the wondrous cross down to its foot, addresses Dante, and, claiming him as a descendant, announces himself to be the spirit of Cacciaguida, the poet's great great grandfather. He relates his history, describes the simplicity of manners in ancient times, and inveighs against the prodigality of the Florentines. He relates the manner in which he gained the palm of martyrdom.

THE will benign, in which is ever shown
The love which doth each righteous breast inspire,
As will perverse is by self-seeking known,
Silence imposed on that melodious lyre, [hand
And still'd the hallow'd chords which Heaven's right
Loosens or strains for that celestial quire.
How can those glorious beings e'er withstand
A righteous prayer, when they to pleasure me
With one accord gave o'er their anthems grand?
Good cause indeed for endless grief hath he 10
Who, choosing things which cannot long endure,
Is of that love despoil'd eternally.
As through the tranquil night serene and pure,
A sudden fire at times its path will trace,
Startling our eyes when heedlessly secure,

That seems a star departing from its place,[1]
Save that we miss, from where 'tis kindled, none,
And that it vanishes in such brief space;[2]
From the horn on the right, so saw I run
Down to that cross's foot a star still faster,
From the bright constellation which there shone;
Nor from its band this radiant jewel past or
Swerved, but sped through the brilliant fastening there,
Which look'd like fire when seen through alabaster.
Thus did the shade of good Anchises fare,[3]
As our great bard, if we believe him, shows,
When, in Elysium, of his son aware.

[1] "And often you may see, when a high wind is impending,
The shooting stars glide from heaven, through the shades nocturnal
They leave behind them long trails of light."

VIRGIL, *Georgics*, i. 365, &c.

[2] Humboldt says of aerolites, "Their direction and enormous velocity of projection (a velocity wholly planetary) render it more than probable that these masses, enveloped in vapours and reaching the earth in a state of high temperature, are small *heavenly bodies*, which the attraction of our planet has caused to deviate from their previous path."—*Cosmos* i. 52. On the other hand, the accretion of copper, condensed from vapour and found in the chimneys of those furnaces where it is constantly smelted, prove the possibility of aerolites being a formation in the atmosphere from the condensation of certain metallic vapours which ascend from the earth.

[3] See *Purg.* vii. 16. So Virgil says of Anchises—

"And when he saw Æneas coming towards him
Through the grass, he joyful stretched out both his hands,
And tears flowed down his cheeks, and a voice was heard from his mouth,
'Thou art come at last, and thy expected piety
To thy parent, hath overcome the difficult journey.'"

Æneid vi. 684.

"O mine own blood, O thou whom overflows[1]
The grace of God; to whom, as now to thee,
Did e'er the heavenly portals twice unclose."
So spake that light: I listen'd reverently.
Then turn'd my face to gaze on Beatrice,
And on each side amazement master'd me.
For in her eyes a glowing smile took rise,
Such that I thought my own the depth had found
Of grace divine, and of my Paradise.
And joyful both in aspect and in sound,
The spirit added to his proem then,
Things for my understanding too profound.
Yet not through choice 'twas hid beyond my ken,
But through necessity, because above
The mark his thinking soar'd of mortal men;
And when the bow of his most ardent love
So slacken'd, that his high discourse descended
To such a mark as human minds may prove,
The first expression which I comprehended
Was, "Blessed be thou, Three and One, that hast
Thus to my seed so greatly condescended."
And added then, "The long and grateful fast
Which reading in the mighty volume brings,
O'er which no change of black or white e'er past,
My son, thou feedest in this light whence rings
My speech to thee; thanks to thy guide that she
For so sublime a flight hath plumed thy wings.
Thou deemest that thy thoughts pass on to me
From the First Cause, even as the radiation

[1] In the original this first address of Cacciaguida is in Latin, which, as the vernacular, in his time had not entirely ceased.

Of five or six from well-known unity.[1]
Hence thou hast ask'd of me no explanation
Of name, or why I seem with joy elate
More than the rest of this blithe congregation.
Thou truly thinkest, for both small and great
In our celestial state, look in that glass
Which doth your unborn thoughts anticipate.
But that the hallow'd love in which I pass
My ever wakeful vision, and the need
Of sweet desire, may their full joys amass,
Let thy voice cheerfully and boldly plead
Thy wish, and utter what thy thoughts require,
To which my answer is even now decreed."
To Beatrice I turn'd, as to inquire;
She heard me ere I spoke, and smiled a sign,
Which amplified the wings of my desire.
Then I commenced: "Your skill and your design,
Who have the Prime Equality[2] in sight,
With equal weight in each of you combine.
For in that Sun which warms and gives you light
Wisdom and goodness hold such equal sway,
That all comparisons must fail me quite.[3]
But human love and wisdom can essay,
For causes which well known to you must be,[4]

[1] "If one exists, it is necessary for number to exist likewise; but if number exists, the many would exist, and an infinite multitude of beings."—PLATO, *Parmenides*.

[2] The Holy Trinity.

[3] In God and glorified spirits, love and knowledge are equal; but in man our affections go beyond our means of expressing them.

[4] Namely, that the human understanding has its limits, while the desires of the soul are boundless.

No equal flight, but different wings display.
Hence as a mortal this disparity
I feel, yet though for thanks my tongue no trope has,
My heart shall own thy blest paternity.[1]
And now my earnest prayer to thee this scope has,
Make me acquainted fully with thy name,
Gem of this jewell'd cross, O living topaz!"[2]
"O thou whom, even while waiting, I became
Well pleased with; O my leaf! I am thy root."
To me, thus answering, such commencement came;
And then he added: "He whose name is put
Upon thy kin, a hundred years and more
Hath paced the cornice at the mountain's foot.[3]
He was my son, and thy great grandsire, sore
And long his toil; which it is fit should be
By thy good works made sooner to be o'er.
Florence within her ancient bound, whence she[4]
Still hears the prayer-bell ring at tierce and nones,[5]
Remain'd in peace and chaste sobriety,
Not deck'd with bracelets, crowns, and precious stones;

[1] "And mean the thanks I cannot speak."
Doddridge's Hymns, Hymn 71, on *Psalm* cxlvi. 2.

[2] The topaz is a precious stone of a gold colour.

[3] Dante's great grandfather, Alighieri, is here described as being in the first circle of Purgatory, where the proud bend under the weight of great rocks. *Purg.* xii. From him Dante's family took the name of Alighieri: their besetting sin was pride. *Purg.* xiii. 138, note.

[4] This description of the simplicity of ancient manners in Florence is one of the most curious and interesting passages in the *Trilogy*.

[5] The clock which regulates the public prayers and business is within the ancient walls of Florence.

No ladies had she so adorn'd[1] that they
Are less regarded than their glittering zones.
The daughter born, the sire not yet gave way
To fear lest age and dower exceed his means,
One way or other, at some future day.
No house was vacant of domestic scenes,
Nor yet had risen there a Sardanapalus,[2]
To show his might among his chamber queans.
Uccellatoio had not Montemalus[3]
As yet surpass'd; but matchless as its height
Its fall shall be, nor can our foresight fail us.
Bellincion Berti,[4] when in leather dight,

[1] *Contigiate*, wearing stockings soled with leather and variously figured and ornamented.

Of the Florentine ladies of Dante's age G. Villani says things which would appear incredible, were it not for what happens in England and America. The *Times* gave a case, proved in the London *Bankruptcy Court*, in which an enormous list of items was "selected from a Regent Street milliner's bill for £2754 0s. 6d." The *Westminster Review* says, "The gravest of social extravagances, that of female dress, has become more conspicuous than at any time within three generations." Perhaps the worst of this extravagance is its tendency to check marriages and promote immorality.

[2] Juvenal despatches him with contempt in a single line:—

"Et venere, et cœnis, et Pluma Sardanapali."—*Sat.* x. 336.

That rough and outspoken reprover of luxury and vice describes the virtuous man as preferring to such a life, all the labours of Hercules.

[3] Or Montemario, an elevated place between Viterbo and Rome, where the buildings of the latter, in approaching it, first become visible, as from the mount Uccellatoio those of Florence; they are therefore figuratively put for those cities. Florence had not yet begun to vie with Rome in the grandeur and magnificence of her buildings, as (it is implied) she had in Dante's time.

[4] See *Inferno* xvi. 37, note.

And clasps of bone, I've seen; and from her glass
With face unpainted walk'd his lady bright.
The Nerli and the Vechii chiefs I class
With those I've seen content with coats of hide,
Whose dames would hours at flax and spindle pass.
O fortunate! each certain, when she died,
Of her own burial place: none yet were made
Widows while off to France their bridegrooms hied.
One watch'd the cradle where her babe was laid,
And lull'd with sounds that from old times have come,
The speech in which their sires and mothers played.
Another, with her maids around, at home,
While spinning from the distaff, stories told
About the Trojans, Fiesolè, and Rome.
Not stranger than had seem'd in days of old
Cianghella,[1] or a Lupo Salterello,[2]
You'd Cincinnatus or Cornelia hold.
To such repose, to city-life thus mellow
And beautiful, to such sweet home convey'd
Of citizens, each faithful to his fellow,
Me Mary gave, sought with loud cries for aid.[3]
Together, in your ancient Baptistry,[4]
Christian and Cacciaguida[5] I was made.
Moronto, Eliséo were to me

[1] A shameless woman of the noble family of Tosa, married to Lito degli Alidosi of Imola.

[2] A lawyer and poet of Florence, at enmity with Dante.

[3] The Virgin Mary was usually invoked in child birth. See *Purg.* xx. 20—24.

[4] See *Inferno* xix. 18.

[5] Little is known of this ancestor of Dante beyond what he has related of him, from which it appears that the poet regarded him as the most noble and valiant of his family.

Brothers; my lady came from Val di Pado,[1]
And thence arose the surname given to thee.
Then followed I the emperor Conrado,[2]
Who midst the army girt me as his knight,[3]
So pleased him what he saw me many a day do.
With him I went against the wrong to fight,[4]
Of that false law[5] whose partizans possess,
Through failure of the Shepherd, your just right.[6]
There, through that filthy people, from the coil
Of the deceitful world I gain'd release,
The world whose love doth many a spirit soil,
And from that martyrdom attain'd this peace."

[1] From Ferrara, a city washed by the Po, Latin Padus, hence Val-di-pado, Valley of the Po.

[2] The emperor Conrad III., who began to reign in 1138, and died in 1152.

[3] Knighted him on the field of battle.

[4] The second crusade against the infidels in the Holy Land. It was undertaken at the instance of St. Bernard, at the Council of Vezelai, Easter, 1146, held in an open field, the castle being too small to contain the assembly. Lewis VII. of France, with his queen, and a great concourse of principal nobility, were present, all of whom assumed the cross. The emperor set out for Palestine in May, 1147, and arrived at Nice in November, from whence with the king of France, each at the head of a numerous army, he marched to Jerusalem. The expedition was full of disaster from beginning to end; and in the following year they led back to Europe the miserable remnant of their troops that had survived. Cacciaguida was among the 30,000 who never returned, and whose loss put Europe into mourning. St. Bernard laid the whole blame of failure on the wickedness of the Crusaders. Yet it was a Holy War, and all who fell in it were considered entitled to the credit and the crown of martyrdom!

[5] The Koran.

[6] See Canto ix. 136, and note.

CANTO XVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Cacciaguida, in answer to Dante's inquiries, relates the time of his birth, describes the former state of Florence, and gives a history of Dante's progenitors, and of the noble families that in his time flourished there, many of which had subsequently gone to decay. He ascribes the degeneracy of Florence to pride, party-spirit, cupidity, and the blending of the old nobility with mercantile families from the country.

Ay me! our slight nobility of blood,
If men on earth of thee speak boastfully,
Where our affection withers in the bud,
No more a marvel will it seem to me;
Since I, where nought our wishes can distort,
I mean in heaven, could boast myself of thee.
Thou art a mantle very soon cut short,[1]
Which time will quickly with his shears consume,
If daily it receive not new support.
With "You"[2]—a custom first endured by Rome, 10

[1] This figure is the more appropriate, inasmuch as the "Mantle" is one of the recognised emblems of nobility. It was usually of silk or velvet, bordered with ermine; and on the escutcheon (Fr. *Hachemen*, or *Achievement*), or representation of armorial bearings, it is placed under the crest and behind the shield.

[2] On finding that the spirit who conversed with him was one of his ancestors, Dante now changed his mode of addressing him from the familiar "Thou" to the more complimentary and re-

Though discontinued by her populace,
My colloquy with him did I resume;
When Beatrice, now distant some small space,
Smiling, like her seem'd, who, 'tis written, cough'd,
When that first fault of Guenever took place.[1]
Then I commenced, "You are my Sire, not soft
Will be my words, through you more boldly spoken:
Above myself you make me mount aloft.
The streams of joy that fill my mind betoken
The inward bliss that springs from its own force,
Which hence 'tis able to sustain unbroken.
Who were your ancestors, my honour'd source,[2]
Tell me, and what these years were, long since gone,
Mark'd by your birth[3] and boyhood's early course?
Describe to me the sheepfold of St. John,[4]
What its extent, and whose desert could claim
Therein to sit the highest seats upon?"
As when a coal is kindled into flame
By the wind's breath, even so that splendour too
More bright at my endearing words became.
And as more beautiful to sight he grew,

spectful "You," of which the Romans had first set the example —but not till they had lost their freedom!

[1] The conversation being on a secular subject, Beatrice is at a greater distance than usual, though at hand; and her smile is one of slight surprise and mirth, like that of the female attendant when Queen Guenever encouraged, instead of repelling, the first freedoms of Lancelot; according to the Romance of *Lancelot du Lac*.—See *Inferno*, v. 129, 137, and notes.

[2] The same question was asked by Farinata; *Inferno*, x. 42.

[3] He wished to know his ancestor's history, and date of birth.

[4] Florence, of which St. John the Baptist was the Patron-Saint. See *Inferno*, xiii. 144, and note.

Even so with sweeter, softer accents there he
Replied; not in our modern speech, 'tis true:[1]—
"Since that same day when Gabriel said, 'Hail Mary,'[2]
Till my own birth[3] relieved with comfort sweet
My sainted mother's anguish temporary,
This planet came his Lion-star to meet,
Five hundred times and eighty, then to be,
Again made radiant underneath his feet.
My ancestors and I were born where he
Who in your annual game hath run a race,
Reaches the last ward's eastern boundary.[4]
Thus much of my progenitors I trace.
But who they were, and whence they did arrive,
Silence, not speech, were fittest in this place.[5]
All those who at that time were then alive
Fit to bear arms 'twixt Mars and our St. John,[6]

[1] Cacciaguida spoke in Latin, in which language Dante gives the first three lines of his discourse. Canto xv. 28.

The Italian Language can be traced no further back than A.D. 999. At the end of the twelfth century, Latin was still commonly used by the nobility, while Italian was the VULGAR tongue.

[2] *Luke*, i. 26—28.

[3] From the birth of Christ to that of Cacciaguida, in 1090, Mars, whose period is 687 days, had returned 580 times to his Astrological "House" in Leo.

[4] The Elisei, Dante's ancestors, lived in the *Sesto*, division or ward, of Florence, called Porta San Pietro, on the east side of the city, but at its western edge or limit, along which the races were run, from west to east, on the annual feastival of St. John.

[5] Probably Dante knew nothing further about them.

[6] Between the ancient statue of Mars on the Ponte Vecchio, and the Baptistery of St. John; the opposite extremes north and south of the ancient city.

Were but the fifth of those who now survive.
Our City's blood, which change hath undergone,
From Campi mix'd, Certaldo, and Figghine,[1]
Pure to the lowest artist then flow'd on.
Far better had those towns a space between ye
And them, and that with limits at Galuzzo[2]
And Trespian still, the present hour had seen ye,
Than have to bear, within your city shut so,
The stench of Signa's and Aguglion's hind,[3]
Who with keen eye for traffic now doth strut so!
Had not that race who lowest have declined,
To Cæsar been a step-dame harsh and dread,
But as a mother to her son been kind,[4]
Such one, grown Florentine, by commerce fed,[5]
Had been sent back again to Simifonti,[6]
Where once his grandsire begg'd his daily bread.

[1] Country towns near Florence.

[2] These nearest neighbours of ancient Florence, when the limits of the city were extended, became included in it.

[3] M. Baldo d'Aguglione, and M. Bonifacio da Signa.—BIAGIOLI.

[4] That is, if the Roman people had continued in their allegiance to the emperor, and thus avoided that spirit of faction in which the Guelf and the Ghibeline parties originated.—See *Purgatorio*, vi. 91, xvi. 106. The wars resulting occasioned that migration of the country people to Florence, which Dante here laments.

[5] Dante seems to have been under the full influence of that Feudal prejudice which regarded mercantile pursuits as degrading, and which continued to prevail in France down to the Revolution. In the good old times of *Chivalry*, the profession of a robber was often carried on by knights and barons, while that of a merchant was left, for the most part, to Jews and Lombards.

[6] A castle dismantled by the Florentines.—G. VILLANI, v. 30.

Still Montemurlo's lords had been the Conti,[1]
The Cerchi in Azone's bounds been fix'd,
Perhaps in Valdigrieve the Buondelmonti.
Mixture of races ever came betwixt
The State and peace, hence her disasters all,
As in the body various meats ill mix'd.
And the blind bull will much more quickly fall,
Than the blind lamb; and often practically a
Sword singly wounds more than fine words will gall.
If Luni thou dost mark and Urbisgaglia,[2]
How they have perish'd and how on the way
Are Chiusi[3] after them, and Sinigaglia,[4]
To hear how noble families decay,
Will then to thee seem no new thing or strange,
Since even cities also pass away.[5]
All you possess must suffer mortal change,
Like you; but this in some doth not appear;
They long endure, but short is your life's range.
And as the Moon, revolving in her sphere,
Ne'er pausing covers and lays bare the shore,
So Fortune doth o'er Florence domineer.[6]

[1] The Counts Guidi, not being able to defend this castle against their neighbours, sold it to the Florentines.—G. VILLANI, v. 31.

[2] Cities formerly of importance, but sunk into decay. Of Luni see *Inferno*, XX. 51, note. All that remains of Urbisgaglia at present is a small castle, not far from Macerata.

[3] A small town on the confines of Tuscany, not far from Perugia.

[4] A small town on the shore of the Adriatic.

[5] "When states and empires have their periods of declension, and feel in their turns what distress and poverty are,—I stop not to tell the causes which gradually brought the house of D'E——, in Britany, into decay."—STERNE.

[6] He makes the dominant party no better than "Minions of

Thou shouldst not therefore wonder at my lore,
About those ancient lofty Florentines
Whose former fame by time is cover'd o'er.
I've seen the Ughi and the Catellines,
Philippi, Greci, Ormann', Albericchi,
Though now decay'd, of old illustrious lines:
I saw them then great as they were antique; he
Of Arca was, and of Sanella he,
The Soldanier, Ardinghi, and Bostichi.
Over the port[1] that with new felony
Of such a weight is laden, that the same
Will cause the bark to founder speedily,
The Ravignani had their seat, whence came
Count Guido, and whoever from of old
Have taken Bellincione's honour'd name.
Once he of Pressa, had he wish'd to hold
Chief rule, knew how; and Galigaio there
Had hilt and pommel, in his house, of gold.[2]
Great was the column then, adorn'd with vair,[3]
Sachetti, Giuochi, Sifanti, Barucci,
Galli, and who 'the bushel' blush to hear.[4]

the Moon!" "The fortune of us that are the Moon's men doth ebb and flow like the sea."—SHAKSPEARE, 1st pt. *Hen.* iv. i. 2.

[1] The *Porta di San Piero*, the Eastern Gate of the ancient city, the houses over which, formerly inhabited by the Ravigni, and then by Count Guido, had been purchased by the Cerchi family, of the Neri party, Dante's enemies, the burden of whose offences, he says, endangered the foundering of the state.

[2] He had acquired these ensigns of nobility.

[3] The arms of the Billi or Pigli were a shield *gules*, impaled with *vair*. Vair, or minever (*menu vair*), is a costly fur of a white colour speckled with black.

[4] Their grandfather, being superintendent of provisions, grew rich by frauds therein, but was discovered and hanged.

The trunk from which have branch'd out the Calfucci[1]
Was mighty then; and to their curule chairs[2]
Were drawn the Sizii and the Arigucci.
How great of old I saw the men whose heirs
Pride has undone! and then the golden balls[3]
Deck'd Florence with all noble deeds of theirs.
Thus did the sires of those who in your halls
Fatten in their Consistory at ease,
When in your Church a vacancy befalls.[4]
That arrogant race[5] who follow him that flees
Cruel as dragons, but to those who show
Their teeth or purse, like lambs not hard to please,
Though rising then, were yet of lineage low;
So that it pleased not Ubertin Donato[6]
That his wife's father should their kinsman grow.
And Caponsacco had at that same date too
Come down from Fesolè, a market-swain;[7]

[1] The Donati.—BIAGIOLI.

[2] The seats of the highest magistracy.

[3] The Abbati, whose arms are said to have been golden balls, "palle d' oro," or in the language of heraldry, Bezants. But Benvenuto da Imola says that the Uberti and Lamberti are intended.

[4] The Visdomini, Tosinghi and Cortigiani, descended from the founders of the Bishopric of Florence, were the curators of its revenues, which, when it was vacant, they spent in good cheer.

[5] The Adimari. One of this family, Boccaccio Adimari, when Dante was in exile, having possession of his estate, ever opposed his recall, which would have necessitated a restoration of the spoil.

[6] He had married one of the daughters of Bellincione Berti (*Inferno*, xvi. 37, note), and was displeased with his father-in-law, for giving another of his daughters in marriage to one of the Adimari, thus making himself their kinsman.

[7] He lived in the Mercato Vecchio (Old Market).

Good burghers too Giuda and Infangato.[1]
I'll speak a truth which credit scarce will gain,
The city's inner circle had a gate
Which did from Pera's house its name obtain.[2]
All who the Della Bella badge of state
Of the great Baron bear,[3] whose worthy name
They on St. Thomas' feast yet celebrate,
Knighthood and privilege can for it claim,
Although among the people one is there
Who borders with a fringe of gold the same.[4]
Then Importuni, Gualterotti,[5] were;

[1] Giuda Guidi and the family of the Infangati.

[2] The gate was named Porta Peruzza, from the family of Pera.

[3] The Marchese Ugo, who resided at Florence as vicar of the emperor, Otho III., gave many of the chief families licence to bear his arms. Induced by a vision, he sold his possessions in Germany, and founded seven abbeys; in one of which, at Florence, his memory was celebrated on St. Thomas's day, the day on which he died. Among the families thus distinguished was that of Della Bella.

[4] Giano Della Bella. At a time when the administration of justice in Florence was overpowered by the licentious tyranny of the nobles, Giano della Bella, of a noble family, encouraged the leading citizens of the middle class to demand the reform of the State; in consequence of which the enormous power of the nobles was curtailed, and the people acquired a preponderance. Giano became an object of hatred to the nobility. New disturbances took place, the blame of which was laid on him by his enemies. He was accused before the magistrates of having stirred up the people to a recent insurrection, and was invited by the people to put himself at their head and assist the executive; but not willing either to put himself on his trial before a partial tribunal, nor to trust to the instability of popular support, he went into voluntary exile.—MACHIAVELLI, *Hist. Flor.* lib. ii.

[5] Two families residing in the Borgo Sant Apostolo.

The Borgo yet had rested free from strife,
If with new neighbours it had had no share.
The house[1] by which your tears have been made rife,
Through the just anger which brought death to you,
And put a period to your happy life,
Was honour'd, and its friends were honour'd too.
O Buondelmonte! how much ill sprang from
Thy flight from nuptials pledged,[2] through counsels
Still blithe were many, now by grief o'ercome, [new!
If God in Ema's waves had let thee drown,
The first time thou didst to our city come.
But it was fated, at the wasted stone
Which guards the bridge, that Florence should supply
A victim ere her latest peace had flown.[3]
With these, and many others like them, I
Saw Florence in such true repose and cheer,
That she might every cause of grief defy.
With these to make her glorious did I see her,
So just she and her people then remain'd,
Ne'er hung reversed her lily on the spear,[4]
Nor was through discord with vermilion stain'd.[5]

[1] The Amidei.

[2] At the instigation of the Donati.

[3] A suitable place for so fatal a deed!—before the ancient statue of Mars, her former patron, whom she thus appeared to invoke—and not in vain.—See *Inferno*, xiii. 144; xxviii. 108, and notes.

[4] Then her arms had never hung reversed on the spear of her enemies in token of her defeat, as they afterwards had.

[5] The lily was the symbol blazoned on the arms of Florence: at first it was *argent*, in a field *gules*—white in a field of red. But after the victory of the Guelfs, it was changed to *gules* in a field *argent*—red in a field of white: "through civil discord," as Dante says, the lily was "stained with vermilion."

CANTO XVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Cacciaguida foretells to Dante his banishment from Florence, and the calamities he was about to suffer, from his ungrateful and wicked countrymen. He portrays the sad condition of the exile, dependant on others for support; he describes the first of Dante's hospitable patrons, the Lord of Verona; predicts the military achievements of his son, Can Grande della Scala; exhorts the poet to make known what he had seen; and counsels him, without respect of persons, and with the most perfect regard to truth, however distasteful it might be to some, to write and publish the TRILOGY.

LIKE him who came to Clymenè to know
Of that which he against himself had heard,[1]
For whom yet sires to trust their sons are slow;[2]

[1] Epaphus the son of Jupiter and Io, and Phaeton the son of Apollo and Clymene, were of the same age, and equally proud. Epaphus, provoked by the boasting of Phaeton, told him he was mistaken in supposing Apollo to be his father. Phaeton in an extacy of silent shame, grief, and rage, hastened to Clymene his mother, to demand of her the truth, and implored her to give him proof of his parentage. She in addition to her own assurance, refered him for further and complete satisfaction to his father Apollo, whose temple was at hand.—OVID, *Metam.* i. 748—779. With like anxiety Dante questions his ancestor, as to his future life, prompted by the hints of Farinata and others, *Inferno*, x. 81, 130; xv. 61; *Purgatorio*, viii. 133; xi. 140.

[2] From the fatal result of leave given him, to drive the chariot of the Sun.—*Inferno*, xvii. 106, 108, notes; *Purg.*, iv. 72.

Even such was I; which, ere I spoke a word,
Was seen by Beatrice and that saintly lamp,[1]
Who from his place for me erewhile had stirr'd.
My lady thus address'd me; "Do not damp
The flame, but show the wish thou dost conceive,
Seal'd with the impress of thine inward stamp.[2]
Not that from aught thou say'st we may receive
Knowledge increased, but to accustom thee
To tell thy thirst, which others may relieve."
"O my dear Stem, who soar'st so loftily,
That, as our minds perceive that angles twain
Obtuse can in one triangle not be,
So things contingent are to thee made plain
Ere they occur; fix'd on that point thy sight
To which all times as present appertain.[3]
While I with Virgil's aid, up to its height
That mountain climb'd, where souls receive their cure,
And went down to the world of endless night,[4]
Some words did then my future life assure
Of grief, although I feel myself to be
Well squared[5] the blows of Fortune to endure.
If then what Fortune has in store for me

[1] Cacciaguida.

[2] Anxious, yet fearful, he is encouraged by Beatrice to inquire.

[3] By direct communion with the Fountain of all intelligence.

[4] "*Mondo defunto.*"—See *Inferno*, viii. 85, *Purgatorio*, xxiii. 122.

[5] PLATO, in his *Protagoras* (sect. 73), has, "For Simonides somewhere says to Scopas, son of Creon the Thersalian, 'That to become a good man is truly difficult, square as to his hands, and feet, and mind, fashioned without fault.'"—*Works*, vol. i. p. 269 (Bohn). And ARISTOTLE says in his *Ethics*, "The virtuous man bears prosperous and adverse fortunes every where and at

I knew, my wishes would be satisfied;
More gently smites the shaft that we foresee."
I in these words to that same light applied
Who spake to me before, and in the way
That Beatrice will'd my wish was notified.
Not by enigma, such as did betray
The foolish nations,[1] ere that he was slain,
The Lamb of God who takes our sins away;
But in such words as were precise and plain,
Was answer made me by that love paternal,
Shown by the smile in which it did remain.
"Contingency, which swaying your diurnal,
Beyond material bounds doth not extend,
Is wholly pictured in the view eternal.
This to necessity no aid can lend,[2]
Unless a ship that down the current floats,
The eye that sees it causes to descend.

all times prudently, as a good tetragon."—We have also HORACE's "Justum et tenacem propositi virum, non civium ardor prava," &c., "mente quatit *solida*."—*Carm.* iii. 3. The Greek word τετζαγωνος is an adjective, and signifies quadrangular, square; hence, broad shouldered, robust, stout: metaphorically, *firm, constant, perfect, accomplished.*

Dante's figure may have been a square tower, a cube, a "*brick;*" which last, though not square, is quadrangular.

"Do Fortune what she will I stand prepared."

Inferno, XV. 93.

[1] The heathen Oracles, by which, before the establishment of the Christian Religion, the world was deceived.

[2] The simple knowledge of an event *cannot* necessitate it. An event may be certain, that is, certainly known, to the Infinite Mind, yet not necessary. Contingency is not the opposite of *certainty*, but of necessity.

From thence,[1] as from an organ come the notes
Harmonious to the ear, so to my sight
The time for thee prepared itself denotes.
From Athens as Hippolytus took flight,
Driven by his cruel step-dame's[2] treacherous lies,
So to thy Florence thou must bid good night.
This is desired, and this they now devise;
And he who plans will soon effect the same,
Where they of Christ make daily merchandise.[3]
The common clamour will, as usual, blame
The injured party;[4] but the vengeance clearly,
Which Truth shall deal, will then the truth proclaim.
Thou wilt leave every thing which thou most dearly
Hast loved,[5] and this first shaft which thou must bear,

[1] From the Divine presence and prescience.

[2] Hippolytus was the son of Theseus by the Amazon Hippolyte. Phædra was the wife of Theseus, and was smitten with an unconquerable passion for her son-in-law. The story is a parallel with that of Joseph and the wife of Potiphar. Hippolytus on his banishment from Athens, was killed by being thrown from his chariot and crushed under its wheels. Phædra on hearing this result of her false and perjured accusation against him, hung herself.—See The *Hippolytus* of EURIPIDES. This masterpiece of its author exhibits the sublime spectacle of heroic virtue, in vain assailed by temptation, calumniated, oppressed, and overwhelmed.

[3] At Rome, where the expulsion of Dante's party, the Bianchi, from Florence, was then (in 1300) being plotted; and Boniface VIII., infamous for simony (*Inferno*, xix.) having induced Charles of Valois, brother to Philip le Bel of France, to come to Florence, under pretence of reforming it. This expulsion was effected in January, 1302. See *Inferno*, vi. 64—75.

[4] See *Inferno*, xxvi. 9, and note.

[5] "What, is it a great evil, to be deprived of one's country? The greatest; in fact, greater than can be described."
EURIPIDES, *Phœnissæ*, 391, 392.

Will from the bow of exile touch thee nearly.
Next thou wilt find how bitter 'tis to share
The bread of others, and how hard the wending
To mount and to descend another's stairs.
But the worst load thy shoulders then offending,
Will be the vile and senseless concourse thrown,[1]
Along with thee and in that vale descending:[2]
Which all ungrateful, mad, and impious grown,
Will turn against thee; but in little space,
Not thy brows will be crimson'd, but their own.
Of their brutality with rapid pace
They'll give plain proof, 'tis therefore well for thee
That thou a party by thyself dost place.[3]
Thou thy first refuge and first hostelry
In the great Lombard's courtesy wilt find,
Who o'er the ladder bears the eagle;[4] he
Will entertain for thee regard so kind,
That, of to give and ask, between you two,

[1] "With these vile companions of his exile, Dante in vain attempted a forcible entrance into Florence. After this miscarriage he quitted the confederacy disgusted by the bickerings, jealousies, and bad faith, of the heterogeneous and unmanageable multitude, which common calamity had drawn together, but could not cement by common interests."—*Life of Dante*, LARDNER'S Cab. Lib.

[2] *Inferno*, i. 14.

[3] As Wordsworth says in his Apostrophe to Milton, "Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart."

[4] *Della Scala* signifies, "Of the ladder." Bartolomeo della Scala, Lord of Verona, with whom, after the expulsion of the Bianchi from Florence, Dante found a hospitable home. The ladder and the eagle above it, were the arms of the family. Boccaccio says it was Alberto della Scala, whose three sons were Can Grande, Alboino, and Bartolommeo.

That will precede which others place behind.
With him that other thou wilt also view[1]
Whose deeds will be sublime, since at his birth
Such virtue from this valiant star[2] he drew.
As yet the world knows nothing of his worth,
Since he is young, for but nine years complete
These orbs have round him roll'd their heavenly mirth.
But ere the Gascon[3] shall great Henry cheat,
The sparkles of his virtue shall appear,
For wealth and toils alike with scorn he'll treat.[4]
His generosity will far and near
Be known, so that his very foes will thence,
Unable to be mute, his name revere.
Wait thou for him and his beneficence:
By him transposed shall many people be,
And interchange their wealth and indigence.
And bear this written in thy memory
Of him, but speak it not;" and things he said[5]
Incredible to those who them shall see.[6]
Then added; "Son, these comments have I read
On what was told thee: see what snares for thee
Beyond a few revolving years lie spread.
Not envious of thy neighbours needst thou be,
Because thy life yet longer shall endure

[1] Can Grande della Scala, to whom this third Cantica of the Trilogy was dedicated by its author.

[2] From the planet Mars.

[3] Clement V., a native of Gascony, had favoured the election of Henry VII., but secretly opposed his coming into Italy.

[4] *Inferno*, i. 103.

[5] See *Revelation*, x. 4.

[6] Dante had high expectations of Can Grande della Scala, such as he ventured not fully to express. See *Inferno*, i. 102 – 108.

Than the just vengeance of their perfidy."
As soon as, from his silence, I was sure
The holy soul had ceased to send the woof
Into that web which I would fain secure,
I, like a man who for his own behoof
Craves counsel in perplexity from one
Wise, just, and of whose friendship he has proof,
Began, "Well mark I, father, how spurs on
The time that will inflict on me a blow
Heaviest when most one's fortitude is gone:
With prudence then 'twere well I arm'd me, so
That if I lose the place to me most dear,[1]
I may not others through my songs forego.[2]
Down through the world of endless woe severe,
And on the mountain from whose beauteous height
Upsoaring me my lady's eyes did bear,
And afterwards through heaven from light to light,
Have I learn'd that which, if I should relate,
A bitter taste in many 'twould excite.
And if on Truth a timid friend I wait,
To lose my better life 'mongst those, I fear,
To whom this age will seem of ancient date.
The smiling light that held my treasure dear,
Which there I found, first shone forth dazzlingly,
Like sunbeams from a golden mirror clear.
"A conscience darkled o'er," then answer'd he,
"That would its own or others[3] shame conceal,

[1] Dante's love of his country ever and anon shines forth, and he here shows with how much reluctance he exposes her faults.

[2] "That being exiled from my own country, I may not by the boldness of my censures deprive myself of every other refuge."

[3] Either of themselves and family connections, or as being privy to the crimes of others.

Will feel thy sayings harsh, undoubtedly.
But be it thine the vision to reveal
Entire, and every falsehood to remove;
And let them scratch where they the tingling feel.[1]
For though thy voice may their displeasure move
At the first taste, yet vital nourishment,
Whene'er it is digested, will it prove.
Thy cry will smite with stroke most violent,
Even like the wind, the tops that highest rise,[2]
Which is of honour no slight argument.
Hence in these radiant circles of the skies,
In yonder mount, and in the dolorous valley,
Those known to fame alone[3] have met thine eyes.
Because the hearer's mind thou canst not rally,
Nor by examples given his credence gain,
If they are mean and trivial radically,
Nor yet by arguments that are not plain."

[1] None of the translators have ventured to give a literal version of "la rogna." ALFIERI annotates the two preceding lines, but does not *touch* this, as if he feared its contagion. BIAGIOLI defends the expression by saying that in Dante's time the word "was *perhaps* more noble or less ignoble than in our age." If so, the thing itself must have been so, which implies a reflection on the habits of nobility in former times, and a compliment to the superior cleanliness of the higher and middle classes of our own.

[2] "Oftener by the wind is agitated
The lofty pine, and with more grievous ruin
Fall the high towers, and on the mountains thunder
Strikes their tall summits."

HOR. *Carm.* lib. ii. 10.

[3] Noted for their eminent position, or for their good or bad qualities and deeds.

CANTO XVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Dante, at the instance of Beatrice, shakes off the gloom which the prediction of his future calamities had inspired, and seeks a renewal of the conversation with Cacciaguida, by whom he is shown the souls of many renowned Crusaders and Warriors. Then, accompanied by Beatrice, he ascends to the sixth heaven, in the *Sphere of Jupiter*, the *Planet of Justice*, where dwell the souls of those who in high stations on earth have governed righteously. These collectively arrange themselves in the form of an Eagle. A vehement invective against the apostacy of the Church, and the covetousness and venality of the Papal Court.

Now in his thoughts apart rejoicing stood
That blessed soul, the sweet I taste no less,
With bitter temper'd,[1] in my pensive mood.
And she who gave me to my God access, [tain
Said, "Change thy thoughts, and know that I main-
Approach to Him who will all wrong redress."
Then straightway turn'd I to the loving strain
Of my consoler, and what love I spied
In those pure eyes, from telling I refrain.
Not speech alone distrusting, but beside, 10
The mind has not sufficient power to mount
So much above itself without some guide.

[1] "Chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy."
SHAKSPEARE, *As you Like It*, iii. 3.

But thus much of that moment I recount,
That when on her I fix'd my steadfast gaze,
All else to me appear'd of small account;
Till the Eternal Joy that in full blaze
Beam'd then on her, the face of Beatrice
Reflecting, gladden'd me with its bright rays;
O'ercoming with the smile which there took rise,
"Turn thee and listen," then to me she cried;
"Not in mine eyes is thy sole Paradise."
As here affection sometimes is descried
Even in the countenance, if of such might
That with it the whole soul is occupied;
Thus in the flashing of that holy light[1]
To which I turn'd, I saw the wish display'd,
Some further converse with me to invite.
"In this fifth bower of"—prelude thus he made,—
"The tree whose life is from its top derived,
With constant fruits, and leaves that never fade,[2]

[1] Cacciaguida.

[2] In the Scandinavian Mythology the famous ash-tree Ygdrasil, the tallest and most beautiful of all trees, covers the whole earth with its branches, and towering above the heavens overshadows the mansions of the gods. To preserve it ever green it was watered by the Nornor (the Fates or Destinies), who distribute to man the various events of his life, good or bad. It had three roots; one reached to Nifelheim (Cloud-home), where Nidhogg, a monstrous serpent, lay and gnawed it at the well Hvergelmer, the source (of ice, snow, wind, rain, and) of the twelve infernal rivers (poisonous streams). Another extended to the abode of Rimthursar, and under it was the well Mimer, the fountain of wisdom, where Odin left his eye in pledge for a cup of its inspiring waters. The third stretched to Asar and the human world. Beneath it was the holy spring Urd, where two swans were nursed, the progenitors of all other swans, and where

Are blessed spirits, who, ere they arrived
In heaven, were such, their names aloft were borne,
And, every Muse enriching, have survived.
Look therefore at the Cross on either horn;
He whom I name to thee will therein act
Like the swift fires when they the cloud adorn."
I saw a light make through the Cross its tract,
As he named Joshua, nor was known to me
Which first occurr'd, the utterance or the fact.
I, at the name of the high Maccabee,[1] 40
Saw moved another, whirling with delight,
As at the scourge the top spins rapidly.
For Charlemagne thus did my eager sight,
And for Orlando,[2] two of them pursue,

the gods sat in judgment, passing it every day on horseback over the sacred bridge Bafrost (the Rainbow), on which the giants dared not tread. In a hall under it lived three virgins of the Nornor, *Urd* (the Past), *Verdandi* (the Present), and *Skulda* (the Future), who dispense the ages of men.

This celestial tree was doomed, nevertheless, to suffer much; its buds were devoured by stags, its roots by venomous snakes, while a certain squirrel continually ran up and down to sow discord between the eagle that sat perched among the boughs with a hawk on its head, and the great serpent Midgard Sormen, or Jormungandar (Earth's monster), that lay in the abyss.

[1] Judas Maccabæus, who fought against the tyrant Antiochus, for the freedom of Israel, for the law of God, and for the recovery of the Holy Land from idolatrous profanation.

[2] "Much confidence I've here in Dante placed,
Who, not without good grounds, to heaven did send
Charles and Orlando, by whom he saw traced
That holy cross he well conceived and penn'd;
And O, that age what ignorance disgraced!
Which while great Charles his life on earth did spend,

As the eye follows one's own falcon's flight.[1]
My glance then William and Rinaldo[2] drew,
And the Duke Godfrey,[3] that bright cross along,
And Robert Guiscard also,[4] full in view.
Thence moved and mix'd the other lights among,
The soul that spake to me, his skill divine
Show'd midst the artists of celestial song.
To know from Beatrice by word or sign
What I should do, I turn'd myself upon
My right hand, and as towards her I incline,
Such change I saw her eyes had undergone,
So joyous they in their apparent mood,
That all their former brightness they outshone.

No Livy, Sallust, Justin had to indite, or
Along with him no Greek or Latin writer."
PULCI, *Morgante Maggiore*, XXVIII. 40.

[1] See *Purgatorio*, XIX. 61—66, notes.

[2] Two celebrated heroes in the age of Charlemagne. The former, William I. of Orange, supposed to have been the founder of the illustrious family so entitled; the latter the hero of ARIOSTO's Poem.

[3] Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, one of the most illustrious heroes of ancient or modern times. He commanded the Christian army of the First Crusade. He took Nice, the capital of Bithynia, A.D. 1097, then Antioch and Edessa, and in 1099 Jerusalem, where the Crusaders laid the foundations of a new kingdom, of which Godfrey was unanimously elected king. He refused that high title, but governed Jerusalem with that valour, equity, and prudence, which have immortalized his name. He died about a year after his conquest, leaving his dominions to his brother Baldwin, prince of Edessa, who without the least hesitation assumed the title of king.

Godfrey is the hero of TASSO's *Gierusalemme Liberata*; and has been celebrated by PETRARCH, *Trionfo Della Fama*, cap. ii.

[4] See *Inferno*, XXVIII. 14, and note.

And as by feeling more beatitude
In doing well, a man from day to day
Is wont his virtuous progress to conclude;
So I perceived my upward circling way,
Borne with the heavens, had now enlarged its arc,
Since now that wonder[1] shone with brighter ray.
And as the sudden change we oft remark,
When from her countenance a lady fair
A load of blushing shame doth disembark;
Such, as I turn'd to her, did she appear,
Through whiteness of that temperate star[2] to rise,
The sixth which had received me in its sphere.
I in that Jovial torch-light of the skies
Saw sparkles of the love that there had sway,
To represent our language to mine eyes.
As from the river-brink birds wing their way,
As if their new-found pastures greeting well,
Now in round troop, and now in long array;
So in those lights the saintly souls that dwell,
While flying sing, and of themselves are fain

[1] That Lady of wondrous virtue and beauty.

[2] Jupiter is called by astrologers "The Temperate Star," the reason of which will appear from the following passages:

"The planet Jupiter, situate between the too great heat of Mars and the cold of Saturn, is tempered by both, and is thus rendered salutary and benign."—PLINY, lib. ii. cap. 8.

"Ptolemy says that Jupiter is the star of temperate complexion, midway between the coldness of Saturn and the heat of Mars. The second reason is, that among all the stars it appears white, as if silvered."—DANTE'S *Convito*.

Beatrice, having risen with Dante from Mars to Jupiter, loses the ruddy colour of the former for the white hue of the latter.

To form the shapes now D, now I, now L.[1]
First chant they moving to their hallow'd strain,
Then rang'd in letter'd shape as they desire,
They pause and silent for a while remain.
O heavenly Muse, who dost thy sons inspire,
And make them glorious and for aye renown'd,
As they do realms and cities by thy fire;
Illumine me, that I their praise may sound,
And as I have conceived, their forms display;
And let thy power in these brief strains be found.
In letters five times seven arranged were they,[2]
Vowels and consonants; and as they pass'd,
Each group I mark'd, and what it seem'd to say.
LOVE JUSTICE,[3] thus was the first party class'd,
The verb and noun all drawn in letters bold:
YE WHO ON EARTH DECIDE IN DOOM, came last.
Then in the M of that last word, behold,
They so remain'd arranged that Jupiter
Seem'd there a silver disc inlaid with gold.
And other lights I saw descending where
The M shot upwards, and there pausing stand,
Singing, I think, the Good that brought them there.
Then, as in shaking of a lighted brand,

[1] The letters which form the first syllable of the Latin sentence *Diligite justitiam.*

[2] Dante was evidently partial to symbolical numbers. See *Purgatorio*, xxxiii. 43, and note. He has greatly increased here the difficulty of translating him, by giving the number of letters in the Latin sentence quoted. Cary, Wright, Pollock, and Cayley, have alike retained the Latin sentence without venturing to translate at all. In the text it has been rendered into English, without sacrificing either the sense or the *numbers!*

[3] "Diligite justitiam, qui judicatis terram."—*Liber Sapientiæ*, i. 1.

Innumerable sparks are seen to rise,
Which are for omens by the foolish scann'd,[1]
More than a thousand lights before mine eyes
Remount, a little some to ascend, some higher,
As wills that Sun which all their light supplies.
When in their places rested all that quire,
The head and neck I of an eagle spied,
Distinctly figured in that flecker'd fire.[2]
He who there paints them hath himself no guide,
But guideth all; and from Him flows confess'd
That instinct whence the birds their nests provide.
That other company of spirits blest,
Erst seen content to lily-crown the M,
Slowly complete the eagle's form impress'd.[3]
Sweet Star! thou show'dst me many a glorious gem,
Proving our earthly justice an effect
Of the bright heaven which thou dost so begem.[4]
Hence I, the Mind that gave and doth direct
Thy power and motion, pray that now He would
The smoke that vitiates thy beams detect;[5]

[1] One of the innumerable superstitions belonging to augury was, to presage riches in proportion to the quantity of sparks that fly from a shaken brand.

[2] The spirits are seen to settle on the M, in the form of an eagle, the bird consecrated to Jupiter.

[3] The M, consisting of spirits, formed the wings and tail of the eagle; to complete which, the head and neck appear, first in dim similitude, like a type or mould, and then filled up with the glorified spirits, crowning the M as with lilies.

[4] Dante's belief in judicial astronomy appears in this passage.

[5] He prays that God would notice those who set so bad an example; and purge his Church from the simonists, who held the chief places of honour and influence therein.

And that once more he'll drive that venal brood,
The traffickers who in his temple stay,[1]
Once wall'd with miracles and martyr's blood.
O ye bright hosts of heaven, whom I survey,
Implore for those that live on earth, who are
All through that ill example[2] gone astray.
Once 'twas the custom with the sword to war;
Now here, now there, to wage it[3] they deprive
Of bread, which the Good Sire from none would bar.
Thou who to write, then cancel,[4] dost contrive,
Beware, since Paul and Peter, to their tomb
Sent for the vine thou spoil'st, are yet alive.
Well mayst thou say, "So fix'd I am become
In love to him[5] who lived remote from all,
And for a dance was led to martyrdom,[6]
The Fisherman I neither know, nor Paul."[7]

[1] As on two occasions; *John* ii. 14, and *Matt.* xxi. 12.

[2] That of Pope Boniface VIII. *Purgatorio*, xvi. 98—129.

[3] The interdict on communities, and excommunications of individuals. Dante complains that these were employed as weapons of civil and political warfare. But God gives the bread of life to all who truly repent.

[4] Excommunications and Church censures, issued for no other purpose than to be paid for revoking them.

[5] John the Baptist, "the glorious Eremite," whose image was stamped on the coin of Florence.

[6] *Matt.* xiv. 6—11; *Mark* vi. 21—27.

[7] The Pope cared more for the glittering image of the Baptist on the golden florin, than for the doctrines, precepts, and examples of the Apostles.

CANTO XIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Eagle, formed of those holy lights, declares the cause of its exaltation to the state of glory; and expounds to Dante the doubt which he had entertained respecting the salvation of those who die unbaptized. He explains the necessity of Faith, reproves the inconsistency and exposes the guilt of those Christians whose conduct is unsuitable to their profession, and foretells the condemnation and shame of many contemporary potentates at the day of judgment.

BEFORE me there appear'd with wings expanded
That image fair which with sweet pleasure teem'd,
Filling with joy the souls together banded.
And each of them a little ruby seem'd,
In which the Sun's ray so intensely burn'd,
That on mine eyes its bright reflection beam'd.
What next I have to tell was never learn'd
From human utterance, nor with ink was penn'd,[1]
Nor by imagination e'er discern'd.
That eagle's beak I heard, and also kenn'd,
Speak, and send forth a voice with *I* and *My*,
When *We* and *Ours* it really did intend.[2]

[1] "The joie ne maie not written be with inke."
CHAUCER, *Troil. and Cress.* iii.

[2] The eagle here in its united capacity signifies, in the Allegorical sense, the Roman empire; in the Moral sense, it is an emblem of a righteous community.

It said; "For being just and pious I
Am here exalted to celestial glory,
Which leaves no wish without its due supply.
On earth I've left a name not transitory,
There yet by a degenerate race renown'd,
Although they will not emulate the story."
Thus as one heat from many coats is found
To come, so from these many loving powers
One was the voice that eagle-form did sound.
And I address'd them, "O perennial flowers
Of endless joy, whose odours all, though many,
Appear but one to faculties like ours;
To end my fasting, now the truth explain ye;
Through hunger which has held me long I quail,
Finding of proper food on earth not any.
I know, if any realm in heaven reveal
Justice Divine, that hath its mirror bared,
By you it is discern'd without a veil.[1]
Ye know how earnestly I am prepared
To listen; and ye know the doubt in me,
Through which so long I have in hunger fared.
Like as the falcon, from his hood set free,[2]
Erects his head, and proudly claps his wings,
Eager for flight,[3] and grows more fair to see;
Even such I saw that sign become, which rings
With praises of the grace Divine, entwined
With songs known only where heaven's rapture sings.

[1] 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12; 2 *Cor.* iii. 18.

[2] See *Purgatario*, xix. 61—66, notes; xiii. 72, and note.

[3] "Rinaldo stood, as is a falcon wont,
Freed from the hood, when on the watch he stands."
PULCI, *Morg. Magg.*, xi. 70.

It said, "He who the world's extreme defined
Turning the compasses,[1] and did compress
Therein what's open or in darkness shrined,
Could not on his whole universe impress
His power so much, but that His Word most pure
Should still remain in infinite excess.[2]
And hence, of the first proud one, we are sure
That he, the top and sum of every creature,[3]
Not waiting for the light, fell immature.[4]
And hence all beings of inferior feature
Are scant receivers of that boundless Good,
Which can be measured but by its own nature.
Therefore our vision, fitly understood
To be a ray of that Eternal Mind,
Who filleth all things with his plenitude,[5]
Can never be so perfect, but we find
That unto Him who is its source must be
Wisdom far greater than our own assign'd.
Into Eternal Justice then while ye
On earth have power to look, but such 'tis found

[1] "When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass (described a circle) upon the face of the deep."—*Prov.* viii. 27.

[2] The creation of the universe cannot have exhausted the power of God and the efficacy of his Word. The effect is finite, the Cause is infinite.—*Eph.* iii. 20.

[3] If Lucifer could not reach the secrets of the Divine counsels, much less can any of inferior nature.

[4] He was not content to wait for that superior illumination which would have perfected his nature; and so he fell, without attaining that ultimate grace with which, had he continued faithful, his probation would have been crowned.

[5] "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."—*Jer.* xxiii. 24.

As hath your eye to penetrate the sea.[1]
Near shore your sight may to the bottom sound,
Not on the ocean; yet no less, I ween,
'Tis there, but hidden by the depth profound.
No light have ye but from the pure serene,
Stormless; all else is dark, or else a shade
From flesh, or poison spread therein unseen.
Now has the cavern been enough display'd
In which the living Justice was conceal'd,
Of which so often thou hast question made.
'A man is born,' thus have thy thoughts appeal'd,
'On Indus' bank, where there is none to teach
Of Christ, nor read, nor write aught that's reveal'd;
And, far as human reason's ken can reach,
His wishes and his acts are good and wise,
And without sin he is in life and speech;
Yet without faith, and unbaptized, he dies.
Where is the justice that condemns him? Where
His fault, except that which his birth supplies?'[2]
Now who art thou that wilt as in a chair[3]
Sit as a judge, and dost a thousand miles

[1] *Psalm* lxxvii. 19; *Psalm* xxxvi. 6; *Rom.*, xi. 23.

[2] Divine justice cannot be directly opposed to all the sentiments of justice which God has impressed on the universal conscience of mankind. See *Inferno*, Canto iv. 35, and note.

[3] "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" *Rom.* ix. 19. "In this question," says Macknight, "the impiety of forming arguments against God, on account of his distributing to some nations, or to some individuals, favours which he denies to others, is strikingly represented. What God is not obliged to give to any, he may without injustice withhold from whom he will." The different advantages possessed by Jews and Gentiles, Christians and Pagans, is the result of Divine appointment,

With thy short view as of a span compare?
Certes, with subtilty which thus beguiles,
Were not the Scriptures all your wit above,
Doubts full of marvel well might spread their toils.
O earthward souls![1] O minds that grossly rove!
The Primal will, the Sovereign Good, adored,
Good of itself, ne'er from itself can move.
So much is just as doth with it accord:
Created good can nought thereon confer,
Itself but beaming from the Primal Word."[2]
As when the stork, above her nest astir,
Feeding her young, doth hovering round them sweep,
And as the one just fed looks up to her;
Such was the scene, and so mine eyes I keep
Upraised, while that blest image its glad wings
Waved with the impulse of those counsels deep,
And circling chanted; "As the notes heaven sings
Thou understand'st not, so obscure must be
The eternal doom compared with mortal things."
Then those bright spirits, kindled holily,
Rested, yet still abiding in the sign

yet there is no respect of persons with God, whose justice is unimpeachable, though his bounty is free. *Romans* ix. 19 has been most unfairly pressed into the service of Unconditional Reprobation; and with equal unfairness Dante here employs it in defence of that equally "*horribile decretum*" which consigns all unbaptized persons to eternal misery. The Scriptures assure us that "the Judge of all the earth will do right."

[1] "O curvæ in terras animæ, et cœlestium inanes!"
"O souls bow'd down to earth, and void of heaven!"
PERSIUS, *Sat.* ii. 61.

[2] The Word and Wisdom are here regarded as identical. Compare *Prov.* viii. 21—31; *John*, i. 1—14.

Which gave the Romans their supremacy.
It recommenced; "Up to this regal shrine
No one e'er mounted without faith in Christ,[1]
Before or since he on the cross did pine.
But lo, how many cry out 'Christ, O Christ,'
Who shall themselves in judgment further see
From Him, than such as never heard of Christ.[2]
Such Christians will condemn'd by Ethiops be,[3]
When Christ shall sever those two colleges,[4]
One rich, the other poor eternally.
What will the Persians say to your grandees
Now reigning, when they see the volume placed
Open, inscribed with all their villanies?[5]
Then shall be seen, what soon will there be traced
By that unerring pen, 'mongst Albert's deeds,[6]
That which the realm of Praga will lay waste.[7]
There will be seen what on the Seine he breeds
Of dole, by whom the coin is falsified,
Whose future death-stroke from a boar proceeds.[8]
There will be seen the too rapacious pride

[1] *Mark* xvi. 16, must refer to a wilful rejection of the light of truth when *offered*, by those who are *capable* of believing. This is evident from the whole scope of the context.

[2] See *Matt.* vii. 21—23, viii. 11—12; *Luke* xiii. 28—29.

[3] "The Queen of the South shall rise up," &c.—*Matt.* xii. 42.

[4] See *Matt.* xxv. 31, 32. [5] See *Rev.* xx. 12.

[6] See *Purgatorio*, vi. 97, and note.

[7] Albert I. invaded Bohemia, A.D. 1303, made great devastation, and obtained the kingdom for his eldest son Rudolph.

[8] Philip IV. (Le Bel) of France, after his defeat by the Flemings at Courtrai, in 1302, to defray the expense of the expedition, debased the coin of France, by raising its nominal value. His horse being thrown to the ground by a wild boar, he died A.D. 1314.

Which so befools the Englishman and Scot,[1]
That neither will within his bounds abide.
There luxury and softness, their sad blot,
The Spaniard[2] and Bohemian[3] will condemn,
Who worth have never known, and follow not.
There will the lame one of Jerusalem[4]
His bounty with a Roman I disclose,
His vices will require the letter M.
That record will his avarice expose,
And cowardice, who guards the Isle of fire,[5]
Where old Anchises his long life did close.[6]
And his excessive meanness will require
That all by short-hand letters should be shown,[7]
Where much can into little space retire.[8]
And there the foul deeds will to all be known,
His uncle's, brother's,[9] who so much disgrace

[1] Edward I. and John Baliol.

[2] Ferdinand IV. of Castile was reigning at the time of the vision. He reigned from A.D. 1295 to 1312, dying at the age of twenty-four, in consequence, it is said, of his extreme intemperance.

[3] Winceslaus II. (or IV.). See *Purgatorio*, vii. note.

[4] Charles II. of Naples and Jerusalem, son of Charles of Anjou. See *Purgatorio*, vii. 124, xx. 79, and notes. Being lame, he was nicknamed *Ciotto*, = *Zoppo*, lame.—I. and M. are 1 and 1000.

[5] Frederick of Sicily. See *Purgatorio*, vii. 119.

[6] At Drepanum, on the western coast of Sicily, Æneas buried his father Anchises. Virgil makes him say—

"Here, tost on the sea by so many tempests,
Alas! I lost Anchises, in every care and chance my comfort;
Here, worn out with age, O best of fathers,
Thou deserted'st me, saved in vain from so many dangers."
ÆNEID, iii. 708—711.

[7] Stenography. [8] Multum in parvo.

[9] James, king of Majorca and Minorca, brother of Peter III.,

On a famed lineage and two crowns have thrown.
The Portuguese'[1] and the Norwegian's[2] trace
Will there be known, and his of Rascia found,[3]
Who did the coin of Venice much debase.
O blessed Hungary, if left unground
By more ill treatment![4] and O blest Navarre,
Would she the mountain arm that girds her round![5]
Already as an earnest, from afar
Will Famagosta and Nicosia serve;[6]
Against their beast their groans and murmurs are,
Who from those others' footsteps doth not swerve."

and James II. of Aragon, who reigned from 1291 to 1357. See *Purgatorio* vii. 112, 119, and notes.

[1] Dinis, or Dionysius, reigned in Portugal from 1279 to 1325, and was surnamed The Father of his country. Dante probably alludes to the rebellious son of Dionysius.

[2] Haco, Hacon, or Haquin VII., king of Norway, having sheltered the murderers of Eric VII. of Denmark, A.D. 1288, commenced a war with his successor Eric VIII., which continued for nine years, and nearly ruined both kingdoms.

[3] Rascia, or Ratza, a kingdom of Sclavonia from 1161 to 1371, out of which the modern province of Bosnia was formed.

[4] Andrew III. of Hungary began his reign in 1290. The kingdom was disputed by Carobert, son of Charles Martel, and Winceslaus II. (or IV.) of Bohemia. Winceslaus was the successful competitor, and reigned from 1301 to 1304.

[5] Navarre was now under the yoke of France. In 1328, employing the resource here pointed out by Dante, the fortification of the Pyrenean passes, it obtained a monarch of its own.

[6] Cities in Cyprus, here put for the island, whose king at that time, Henry II., of the Lusignan family, was a pusillanimous prince. Dante intimates that symptoms of approaching revolt were perceptible, and thence derives an argument and motive to stimulate the Navarrese to throw off the yoke of France. It may also be implied, that all temporal judgments are a pledge and earnest of that which shall be final and eternal.

CANTO XX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Eagle celebrates the praises of certain ancient and most virtuous rulers, presenting David, surrounded by Hezekiah, Trajan, Constantine, William II. of Sicily, and Ripheus. For the satisfaction of the poet's doubt, he explains how the souls of some who on earth had never received Christian baptism, were seen by him in Paradise; concluding with a caution against rash and presumptuous judgments respecting the future state of others.

When he whose beams to all the world give light,
Departing from our hemisphere goes down,
And day has wholly faded from our sight;
The sky where just before he shined alone,
Is on a sudden kindled up anew,
And many lights by one lit up are shown.[1]
This phase of heaven now met my mental view,
When in that blessed beak, the worldly sign[2]

[1] "One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine."—Young.

It is a remarkable inconsistency in the Ptolemaic system, that the sun, which it regards as a planet revolving with the others round the earth, should nevertheless be reckoned the source of light to the fixed stars. Thus Dante, in his *Convito*, says; "No sensible object in the world is more worthy to be regarded as an emblem of the Deity than the sun, which with sensible light illuminates first himself, and then all celestial and elementary bodies."

[2] The eagle, as a symbol of empire, is often seen on ancient coins. Xenophon says, that the older Cyrus "had for his standard

Of chieftainship and empire, silent grew.
For all those living lights began to shine
More brightly, and to sing new hymns meanwhile,
Which glide and quit this memory of mine.
O sweetest Love! whose mantle is a smile,
How much, which holy thoughts alone inspire,
Appears of thee in yon bright sparkling file!
After those precious beaming stones of fire [course
Which gemm'd the sixth bright sphere,[1] in their dis-
Melodious paused, and mute remain'd their quire,

a golden eagle extended on a spear, and that from him the Persian kings retained it.—*Cyropedia*, vii. Isaiah (ch. xlvi. 11) employs it in his prediction of Cyrus, "Calling from the East the Eagle," עַיִט; the very word in Hebrew letters used by the historian, ΑΕΤΟΣ χρυσους. PLINY, *Hist. Nat.* lib. x. cap. 4, says that in the second consulate of C. Marius, the Romans, who had previously used various animals for standards, made the eagle alone the ensign of the legions, and confined the other figures (wolf, minotaur, horse, boar,) to the cohorts. The Roman eagle, sometimes of gold, but most frequently of silver, was borne on a spear, with its wings displayed. It sometimes rested on a bar which crossed the top of a spear, and sometimes on piled up shields, and was of the size of a pigeon. The name of the legion to which it belonged was usually engraved on it. On the reverse of some of Augustus' and Galba's coins, the eagle holds the thunderbolt in its talons. When Charlemagne became master of the German empire, he added the second head to the eagle, A.D. 802, to denote that the empires of Rome and Germany were united in him. The emperors of Austria still use the "double-headed eagle." In distant imitation of the Romans, Prussia, Russia, Poland, and France, all took the eagle as their standard.

[1] "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire."—*Ezek.* xxviii. 14.

I seem'd to hear a river in its course
Murmur, from rock to rock descending clear,
Showing the abundance of its Alpine source.
As at the cittern's neck the sounds we hear
Assume their tones, and in a flagelet
The notes are at the hole breathed on the ear,
Thus, interposing no delay or let,
That resonant murmur from the Eagle rose
Up through the neck, like hollow tube there set.
Then it became a voice, whose tones disclose
Its meaning through the beak, in words that run
As my heart wish'd, where still its record glows.
"The part in me, which sees and bears the Sun
In mortal eagles,"[1] thus its voice heard I,
"Most earnestly thou now shouldst gaze upon.
For of the lights I hold, those form the eye
That sparkles in my head, who are of mark,
And all besides in their degree outvie.
He who as pupil shines the midmost spark,
Was the sweet singer of the Holy Spirit,
And who from town to town transferr'd the ark:[2]
Now of his fervent strain he knows the merit,
As far as by his counsel it was done,
So far he doth its recompense inherit.[3]
Of the five circling round the eye, that one
Who to my beak the nearest hath his post,
Consoled the grieving widow for her son.[4]

[1] The eagle has in all ages been believed to have a greater power of vision than any other animal.—See *Job*, xxxix. 27—29.
[2] 2 *Sam.*, xxiii. 1, 2; 2 *Sam.*, vi. 2, 17; *Purgatorio*, x. 64.
[3] See Canto vi. 118—120.
[4] Trajan. See *Purgatorio*, x. 75, and note.

Now knoweth he full well how dear the cost
Not following Christ, by his experience
Both of this blessed life and of the lost.
He who is next in the circumference
I speak of in the topmost arch, delay
Of death obtain'd by his true penitence.[1]
Unchanged the eternal judgment keeps its way,
Although a worthy prayer, now knoweth he,
On earth may make to-morrow of to-day.[2]
He who next follows, with the laws and me
Pass'd o'er to Greece,[3] bad fruit from good design,[4]
To yield up to the Pastor Italy.
Now knoweth he how that effect malign
Of his good work, to him no harm is giving,
Although to wreck it did the world consign.[5]
William was he[6] where slopes the arch; now grieving

[1] Hezekiah whose days, in consequence of his prayers and tears, were lengthened fifteen years. 2 *Kings*, xx. 1—6.

[2] When God remits a penalty, or delays the execution of a sentence, this does not imply a change in his counsels. If the remission or postponement are foreseen, so are the facts which constitute the ground or reason for either.

[3] Constantine, in removing the seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, carried with him the legislative and military power, the latter typified by the eagle.

[4] See Canto vi. 1—3. Dante, *De Monarchia*, ii. exclaims "Oh happy people, O glorious Ausonia (Italy), if either he wh weakened thine empire had never been born, or his pious intentio therein had not deceived him!" See *Inferno*, xix. 115—7.

[5] Dante's conviction of the evil arising from the union of the temporal sovereignty and ecclesiastical primacy, in the person of the Roman Pontiff, was deep and intense. See *Purg.* xvi. 97—113.

[6] William I., King of Sicily, at the latter part of the twelfth century. He was of the Norman line of kings, and obtained the

For his decease the land is where he sway'd,
Which weeps for Charles and Frederic who are living.
Now knoweth he what love by heaven is paid
To righteous kings, and by his radiant seeming
His conscious joy is visibly display'd.
Who would believe, mid earth's erroneous deeming,
That he of Troy, Ripheus,[1] in this round
Was fifth among the holy lights here beaming?
Now knoweth he how much more doth abound
The grace divine, than mortals e'er descried,
Although he cannot reach its depth profound."
As when the soaring lark in air wheels wide,
Pouring its warbled strain, then sinks to rest
Silent, with its last sweetness satisfied;
Such seem'd to me the image there impress'd
By that eternal pleasure, at whose will
Each thing in its own nature stands confess'd.
And though in presence of celestial skill

surname of "The Good." His death was as much regretted by his subjects, as (by contrast) the lives and reigns of Charles II. (of Anjou) over Naples, and Frederic II. (of Aragon) over Sicily were to theirs. See *Purgatorio*, vii. 124; xx. 79; *Paradiso*, xx. 79 and notes.

[1] "Ripheus, one who was of all the Trojans,
Most just, and of equitable dealings most observant."
VIRGIL, *Æneid*, ii. 427.

"What," cries Venturi, "a pagan in Paradise! Flat blasphemy!" Biagioli with more reason answers, "For us it is enough to know, that it appeared to Dante an outrage on the Divine justice to think that those who have the misfortune to be born beyond the pale of Christendom, yet live piously, are damned. He would have no one presume to measure immensity with a span, but adore in religious silence the decrees of that God whose goodness and justice are infinite."

My doubt was like the colour seen through glass,[1]
Yet could I not in silence bear it still,
Its weight so press'd me; but it came to pass,
Thus forced, my lips exclaimed, "What things are
Whereat I saw that blessed sign surpass [these?"
Its former self in festal brilliancies;
And nearer and with brighter eye, to me
Replied, my marvelling suspense to ease:
"Because these things I tell thee, thou, I see,
Believèst them, and yet thou seest not how.
Thus though believed, they are conceal'd from thee.
Like him who knows a thing by rote art thou;
He knows its name, but not its nature[2] thence,
Unless another's teaching he allow.
The heavenly kingdom suffers violence
From living Hope and fervent Charity,
The will o'ercoming of Omnipotence.
Not as a man o'er man has victory,

[1] "This is the only allusion I have met with in our author to the art of painting on glass. Tiraboschi traces that invention in Italy as far back as to the end of the eighth century.—*Storia d. Let. Ital.* tom. iii, lib. iii. cap. vi. sect. 7. Warton says the art of painting on glass was brought from Constantinople to Rome before the tenth century. *Hist. Poet.*, vol, iii. p. xxii."—CARY.

[2] *La sua quiditate*, "its quidity," a term of the schools to express the nature, essence, or substance of a thing. It is curious that from the three Latin interrogatives, *Qualis? Quantus? Quid?* the schoolmen formed the three substantives, Quality, Quantity, and Quidity; that while the two former have kept their ground, and passed into common language, the latter never thrived, and was ridiculed by Butler 200 years ago.—

"Where entity and quiddity,
The ghosts of defunct bodies, fly."

But as he wills to be o'ercome by prayer,
And conquer'd conquers through benignity.[1]
The first and fifth soul in the eyebrow there
Excite thy wonder, that they now are seen
With those who this angelic region share.
They left their bodies, not as thou dost ween
Gentiles, but Christians, faith in Him attain'd
Whose feet were to be pierced, or pierced had been.[2]
The one from Hell, where no one ever gain'd
Renew'd good-will, unto his bones came back,
And this reward a lively hope obtain'd;
A living Hope, to use her strength not slack,
In prayer that God would raise him from the grave,[3]
So that the power to will he might not lack.
The glorious soul for whom that Hope did crave,
Returning to the flesh awhile on earth,
Believed on Him who had the power to save.
And thus believing, such true love and worth
Within him blazed, that when again he died,
Worthy was he to share our heavenly mirth.
The other, through the grace to him supplied
From such deep fountain that no finite flight
Of vision its first wave hath e'er descried,
Placed all his love on what is just and right:
From grace to grace God, therefore, gave him then
Of our Redemption, still to come, the sight:
Hence he therein believed, nor would again
From that time forth by pagan filth be stain'd;
And he reproved the sins of wayward men.

[1] See the narrative of wrestling Jacob. *Gen.* xxxii. 24—32.
[2] Ripheus before and Trajan after the crucifixion.
[3] The prayers of Gregory.—See note, line 45.

Those ladies three thou saw'st[1] where they remain'd
By the right wheel, to him for baptism served,
A thousand years ere baptism was ordain'd.[2]
Predestination! O how far have swerved
From the true root those views which men direct,
Who thy first cause entire have not observed!
Be you, ye mortals, wisely circumspect
In judging, for even here where God we see,
We know not yet the number of the elect.
And sweet we reckon this deficiency,
Because the primal good completes our good;
For whatsoe'er God wills the same will we."
Thus aid from that divine similitude,
To render my short-sighted view more plain,
Like dulcet medicine was on me bestow'd.
And as a skilful harper to the strain
Of a good singer sweeps the glancing chords,
By which more pleasure from the song we gain,
So, I remember, while he spoke those words,
I saw that pair of blessed lights above,[3]
As of two eyes the twinkling still accords,
Their flames together with those accents move.

[1] Faith, Hope, and Charity. *Purgatorio*, xxix. 121—122.

[2] Namely, those who taking a partial view of the Divine Perfections, and of the Sovereignty of God, overlook his wisdom, justice, and benevolence; and who instead of regarding predestination as based on foreknowledge, as the apostle Paul does, *Rom.* viii. 29, invert that order, and make foreknowledge spring from predestination. See Canto xvii. 40, and note.

[3] Ripheus and Trajan, whom we must regard as types of righteous pagans, embodying another protest of Dante against the doctrine of their damnation for want of baptism.

CANTO XXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Dante ascends with Beatrice to the seventh heaven in the sphere of *Saturn*, the star of *Contemplation*. A mystical stair or ladder is seen, but its top, which reaches the empyrean, is invisible; and on it glorified beings are descending. One of these, Peter Damian, approaches Dante and converses with him, replying to his questions. He concludes with a severe invective against the pomp and luxury of the pastors and prelates of the age.

Now on my lady's face mine eyes again
Were fixed intently, and my mind the same,
So that no other thing they noticed then.
She smiled not now; but thus commenced the dame,
"If I had smiled, thou wouldst have reach'd thine end
Like Semelè, when ashes she became:[1]
Because my charms, when up the stair I wend
Of the eternal palace, as thou hast
Perceived, shine more the higher I ascend.
Thus would thy mortal power be quite surpass'd,

[1] *Inferno*, XXX. 2, Jupiter's visit to Semelè is thus described:—
"Armed with flames, winds, lightnings, and thunder-bolts,
He reached the house of Agenor, and entered,
Her mortal body sustained not the ethereal tumult,
And she was wholly consumed by these nuptial presents."
OVID, *Metam.* iii. 305—309.

And by such brightness, if not temper'd so,
Seem like a leaf scorch'd by the thunder-blast.[1]
Now up unto the seventh splendour,[2] lo,
We've mounted, which beneath fierce Leo's breast,[3]
Mix'd with his influence, radiates below.[4]
Now let thine eyes and thy attention rest,
And be as mirrors to the shape that will
To thee be in this mirror manifest."[5]
He who considers how mine eyes their fill
Drank in while on her blessed aspect staying,
Will know, when I now turn'd me to fulfil
Another charge, how great in thus obeying
My heavenly escort, was the joy I found,
The one delight against the other weighing.[6]
Within the crystal this world circling round,
The name of that loved king distinguish'd by,[7]

[1] See *Exod.* xxxiii. 20—22.

[2] The Planet Saturn.

[3] The constellation *Leo*, in which is a star of the first magnitude, called *Regulus*, or *Cor Leonis*, "The Lion's heart." At the time of the vision, says Biagioli, Saturn was in 8° 16′ of Leo.

[4] Saturn dull, and Leo hot and fierce.

[5] "Let the crystal planet Saturn (see line 24) be reflected in the mirror of your sight."

[6] "The delight of obeying is equal to that of beholding."

[7] *Inferno*, xiv. 96. Saturn is fabled to have reigned in Italy, and to have employed himself in civilizing the barbarous manners of the people, and teaching them agriculture and the useful and liberal arts.—

"Saturn first came from the ethereal Olympus, [kingdom,
Flying from the arms of Jupiter, and an exile from his reft
He gathered a race indocile and scattered on high mountains,
And he gave them laws, and gave the name of Latium
To the country, because he had there for safety been latent.

Whose reign with innocence and peace was crown'd,
I saw a stair translucent raised so high,[1]
Of golden colour, as with sunbeams blending,
To reach its top in vain my gaze would try.
I also saw, by its broad steps descending,
So many splendours, that thereon, methought,
All the bright lights that shine in heaven were wending.
And as by instinct of their nature taught,
The rooks assembling at the dawn of day,
To warm their chill plumes are to motion wrought;
When some without returning fly away,
Others to whence at first they flew repair,
And others wheeling round their sojourn stay;
Thus in that corruscation some there were
Who flock'd together, as it seem'd to me,

> The golden age of which we speak was under
> This king; thus in tranquil peace he governed the people,
> Until a worse age of another colour crept in insensibly,
> And the madness of war and the love of possessing."
>
> *Æneid.* viii. 319.

Other poets, both Greek and Latin, place the golden age and the reign of Saturn in a different locality, and at an earlier age.—Hesiod, *Works and Days* i. 108—119; Ovid, *Metam.* i. 89—112. It appears to have been a tradition of the Terrestrial Paradise. The *Saturnalia* seems to have been an annual, and the *Dies Saturni* (Saturday), a weekly memorial.

[1] "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." *Gen.* xxviii. 12. So Milton:—

> "Ascending by degrees magnificent,
> Up to the walls of heaven, a structure high,
> That scaled by steps of gold to heaven's gate," &c.
>
> *Paradise Lost*, iii. 501—541.

As soon as they had reach'd a certain stair:
And one that nearest us had linger'd, he
So brilliant grew that mentally I said,
"The love thou signalest full well I see."
But she by whom I waited to be led
In speech or silence, mute remaining, thence
Against my wish my power to ask was fled.
She therefore who perceived my hush'd suspense
Within those eyes of His which all things see,
Now bade me gratify my wish intense.
And I commenced: "Not for desert in me,
Worthy thine answer to receive am I,
But for her sake who bids me ask of thee,
O blessed soul, conceal'd in brightness by
Thy very gladness, now the occasion clear
For which to me thou dost approach so nigh.
And wherefore is it that quite silent here
Is the sweet symphony of Paradise,
Sung so devoutly in each lower sphere?"
"Thy hearing like thy sight is mortal, this
Makes us," he answer'd, "from our song forbear,
As from her smile refraineth Beatrice.
Down by the steps of this most hallow'd stair,
Only to do thee pleasure I attend,
With speech and with the robe of light I wear.
Not through more love more near thee I attend,
As much or more yon flames above preserve,
Whose lustre shows how they in love transcend.
But the high charity by which we serve
Prompt at the bidding of the Will supernal,
Appoints our lot as thou dost here observe."
"O sacred lamp," I answer'd, "I discern well

How in this court free love sufficiently
Prompts you to follow Providence eternal.
But this most difficult appears to me,
Why, out of all the compeers with thee found,
This office should have been predestined thee?"[1]
I had not reach'd the last articulate sound,
Before the light about its centre turning,
Whirl'd itself like a rapid millstone round.
Then answer'd me the love within it burning;
"The Light Divine a ray on me bestows,
Piercing through that wherein I am sojourning,
Whose virtue join'd with my own vision shows
To me, above myself it lifts me so,
The Sovereign Essence whence the splendour flows.
And thence the gladness comes with which I glow,
For just as clear as that is to mine eye,
So doth my flame to equal clearness grow.
But even that soul most luminous on high,
Or seraph who on God with gaze intense
Most looks, thy question could not satisfy.[2]
For so conceal'd in that abyss immense,
The Eternal Will, is what thou now dost ask,
That no created mind can draw it thence.[3]
When thou revisitest the world's vain mask,
Report it thus, that none may e'er presume

[1] Of such "election," selection, or choice, we see innumerable instances among men on earth. See Canto xix. 79; xxxii. 66, 69, 75, and notes.

[2] "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."—*Matt.* xxiv. 36.

[3] "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counseller?"—*Rom.* xi. 34.

To attempt again so difficult a task.
The mind, here bright, is wrapt in smoky gloom
On earth; guess then what power below it has
For what they cannot whom the heavens assume."
Thus did his words prescribe such limits as
Decided me to question him no more,
Except to ask him humbly who he was.
"In Italy are hills 'twixt either shore,[1]
Not far from what is as thy country claim'd,
So high, they leave below the thunder's roar.
The prominence they form is Catria[2] named,

[1] Between the Tyrrhenian and the Adriatic Seas.

[2] A mountain, said to be the highest part of the Apennines, between Gubbio and Pergola, at the foot of which stood the abbey of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, the retreat of Pier Damiano. Dante resided at Gubbio some time, and formed an intimacy with Oderigi, the Missal Painter or Illuminator, whose merits as an artist he has immortalized. *Purgatorio*, xi. 80—81. Peter Damian, on account of his probity, candour, genius, and various erudition, deserves to be ranked among the best writers of the eleventh century, although he was not quite free from the prevalent prejudices and defects of his times.—MOSHEIM. He was a monk, employed by the Popes in divers legations, in which he acquitted himself with success. He wrote much in prose and verse, with ease and elegance, and spoke with freedom to the Popes and other dignitaries. He strove to revive the ancient discipline, and to correct the disorders of the ecclesiastics. He was versed in the Canons and the Scriptures, but was more fond of the allegorical than the literal sense. He recommended the custom of flogging one's self, a custom that was but newly introduced. He gave credit to visions and apparitions, of which he related many. He instituted a congregation of Hermits, who followed the rule of St. Benedict, though they had particular customs of their own.—DU PIN'S *Church History*, vol. iii. pp. 124, 130. He was made Cardinal and Bishop of Ostia by Stephen IX.

Below it stands a hallow'd hermitage,
Which was of old for one sole worship framed."
Thus he commenced his third oration sage,
And then went on: "There I myself did give
To God, and in his service did engage,
So that, though I on olive-juice did live,
With ease the season's rigours I pass'd through,
Contented with my thoughts contemplative.
Richly that cloister its accustom'd due
Once render'd heaven; now vacant is the store,
So that ere long exposure must ensue.
There Peter Damian was the name I bore:
Peter Peccator[1] also had recourse
To our Lady's convent on the Adrian shore.
Little was left me of my mortal course,
When I the Hat[2] was call'd and forced to wear,
Which has but been transferr'd from bad to worse.
Cephas, and he, that vessel great and rare[3]
Of the Holy Spirit, lean and barefoot hied,
At any table taking their poor fare.
Our modern pastors must on either side
Be propp'd up now, and some before them go,
Some bear their train, they are so dignified.[4]

in 1057, and died February 23, 1072, aged 66, at Florence.—TIRABOSCHI.

[1] Called in the Nidobeatino edition of Dante, "Pescator." He founded the convent of Santa Maria del Porto, near Ravenna A.D. 1119.

[2] The Cardinal's Hat.

[3] Peter and Paul. See *Inferno* ii. 92, note.

[4] The state and grandeur affected by the clergy is often com-

Over their palfreys their long mantles flow,
So that both beasts are cover'd with one skin;
How long, O Patience, wilt thou bear it so!"
This being said, I saw more flames begin
From step to step in circles to descend,
And at each whirl more beauty seem'd to win.
Around this flame collected they attend,
Uttering a cry so loud it raised my wonder,
Here nothing can to be its like pretend,
Nor knew I what, so vanquish'd by its thunder.

plained of by Mediæval writers. Piers Ploughman, when speaking of Antichrist, says;—

"Proude preestes come with hym
Mo than a thousand,
In paltokes and pyked shoes," &c.

Vision, l. 14360.

Chaucer also in his Prologue to *Canterbury Tales*, describes the monk as a lord full fat, a fair prelate, sumptuously dressed, with swift greyhounds, and on a fine horse, with the bridle jingling as loudly as a chapel bell.

CANTO XXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

After an admonition from Beatrice, Dante sees a group of the Devout and Contemplative, one of whom, St. Benedict, approaches and converses with him, relating his own history, and the names of some of his companions. He replies to Dante's inquiry, and inveighs against the degeneracy and corruption of the Monasteries. Dante and Beatrice mount up to the eighth heaven, the *Sphere of the Fixed Stars*, and enter the constellation Gemini, where he obtains a panoramic view of the Solar System and the Earth.

Now overcome with stupor, to my guide
I turn'd me, like a little child that flies
Thither where he can always most confide;
And she, as when a mother pacifies
With sudden aid her pale and panting son,
Whom her known voice is wont to tranquillise,
Said, "Know'st thou not thou art above the Sun
In heaven, and all is holy here on high,
Where from pure zeal proceeds whate'er is done?[1]
How the song would have changed thee, thou hereby
Mayst know, and how thou hadst endured my smile,
Since thou art so astounded by the cry.
And hadst thou understood its prayers meanwhile,

[1] The shout was the effect of holy zeal on the part of those who had raised it.

Thou now that vengeance wouldst already know,[1]
Which thou ere death wilt see o'ertake the vile.
Not hasty is the sword on high, nor slow
To strike, though either it may seem to men
Who with desire or terror wait the blow.[2]
But now to other objects turn again,
And thou wilt see bright spirits not a few,
If, as I bid thee, thou bring back thy ken."
Directing, therefore, as she wish'd, my view,
A hundred clustering spherules did I see,
Which in their mutual rays more lovely grew.
I stood as one who tempers inwardly
His keen desire, nor question dares present,
Afraid of taking too great liberty.
The one in size and light preëminent
Among those pearls, to me approach'd alone,
Freely to speak what would my wish content.
Then from its midst I heard, "If thou hadst known,
As I, how ardent is our charity,
Thy wishes thou to us in words hadst shown.
But that in thy high purpose thou mayst be
Not hinder'd by delay, I will reply
Even to the thought so much repress'd by thee.
That mountain where Cassino[3] stands hard by,

[1] Alluding, probably, to the approaching humiliation of Pope Boniface VIII. See *Purgatorio*, xx. 86.

[2] See 2 *Pet.* iii. 9.

[3] A small town and castle on the side of Monte Cassino, in the Terra di Lavoro, a part of the Neapolitan territory. "The mountain rising for the space of three miles, lifts up its top towards the sky, on it was a very ancient temple, in which, after the manner of the old heathens, Apollo was worshipped by foolish rustics. On every side groves had sprung up in honour of false

By a deceived and evil-minded race
Was once frequented, on its summit high.
And I am he who up to that wild place
First bore the name of Him who to our kind
Brought down the saving light of truth and grace;
And so much of that grace upon me shined,
That I induced the neighbouring towns to live
Free from vile worship which misled mankind.
Those other fires were men contemplative,
All kindled by that heat of love sincere,
Whence flowers and holy fruits their birth receive.
Here is Macarius,[1] Romoäld[2] is here,
Here are my brethren who in cloister stay'd

gods, and in these the mad multitude still attended on their unhallowed sacrifices. The man of God arriving, beat in pieces their idols, overturned their altar, cut down their groves, and in the very temple of Apollo built the shrine of *St. Martin*, (!) and by his continual preaching called the multitude that dwelt around to the true faith."—SAINT GREGORY, *Dialog.* lib. ii. cap. 8. This was the origin of the celebrated abbey of Monte Cassino, the foundation of which was laid by St. Benedict, A.D. 529. See *Inferno*, xvi. 100, note.

[1] Du Pin says, there were several hermits of this name, who lived about the same time. For an account of them see DU PIN, *Hist. Ecc. Writers*, vol. ii. p. 56.

[2] In 1023 St. Romoaldo or Romauld, a native of Ravenna, retired to Camaldoli on the Mount Apennine, and in that solitary retreat founded the order or *Congregation of the Camaldolites*, which still remains in a flourishing state, particularly in Italy. He wrote a commentary on the Psalms, and died in 1027. His followers were distinguished into two classes, the Cœnobites and the Eremites. Both observed a severe discipline, but the Cœnobites have degenerated much from their primitive simplicity. See MOSHEIM *Ecc. Hist.* Cent. xi. Part ii. ch. ii. sect. 24; and *Purgatorio*, v. 96, note.

Their feet, with hearts fix'd firm to persevere."
And I to him; "The love thou hast display'd
In speaking, and the looks which evidence
Good will in all your ardours now survey'd
By me, have thus enlarged my confidence,
Even as the Sun the rose, when opening wide
In fullest bloom its gay circumference.
I pray thee, therefore, father, to decide,
Can so much grace be render'd, that by me
Thine image unconceal'd may be descried?" 60
"Brother, thy lofty wish," thus answer'd he,
"Will be accomplish'd in that last high sphere
Where our desires fulfill'd we all shall see.[1]
Perfect, mature, and undiminish'd there
Is every wish; and in that sphere alone
All parts continue as they always were;
For there no bounds of place, no poles are known:[2]
To that high region doth our stair ascend,
Whence far beyond thy vision it hath flown.
Up to that sphere the patriarch Jacob kenn'd 70
That ladder elevate its topmost round,
When he thereon saw thronging angels wend.[3]
But now from earth is no one thither bound,
No feet mount up that stair; and my strict rule
Remains below so much waste paper found.
The abbey walls, which were so beautiful,
Are turn'd to dens; the cowls which they inclose
Are sacks that with corrupted meal are full.

[1] The "Steadfast Empyrean."

[2] The Empyrean being immoveable could have no poles, like the spheres which it enclosed.

[3] See Canto xxi. 28, and note.

Foul usury doth not so much oppose[1]
God's will, as that bad fruit which there finds place,
From which the monkish heart so madden'd grows.
For whatsoe'er the Church holds, if we trace,
'Twas ask'd for God's sake, for his poor to share,[2]
And not for kinsfolk, nor for those more base.
But mortal flesh is of such fragile ware,
The best commencement often will not hold
From the oak's birth till she the acorn bear.
Peter commenced, nor silver had nor gold;[3]
With prayer and fasting I began my own;
His convent Francis humbly too enroll'd.
Look thou from what beginning each hath grown,
And if thou then mark whither they have stray'd,
Thou must perceive that white is changed to brown.
Jordan, 'tis true, turn'd back, as if afraid,
And the sea fled;[4] more marvellous to see,

[1] See *Inferno*, xi. 111.

[2] About A.D. 470, it was ordained in the Western Church that the goods of the Church should be divided into four parts, one for the Bishop, the second for the other ministers, the third for the fabric of the Church, which included not only the place where the people met, but also the residences of the Bishop, of the other clergy, and of the sick and widows, and the fourth part for the poor of the place; the bishop having, out of his own portion, to lodge and entertain the strangers, whether clergy or laity, who came from a distance. And these four parts were divided in such proportion as the numbers of the poor and of the other claimants required. *Trattato della Materie Beneficiarie* Di Frà PAOLO SARPI, pp. 25, 26; *Opere*, vol. v. Ed. Venet. 1676.

[3] *Acts* iii. 6; *Inferno*, xix. 90—96.

[4] *Psalm* cxiv. 3—7. The sentiment of Dante here is, that as God interposed of old miraculously for the deliverance of his people and the punishment of their enemies, it was to be expected

When God thus will'd, than succour here display'd."
'Twas thus he spake, and then retreated he
To his own comrades, who together drew,
Then like a whirlwind rose unitedly.
And up the stair by my sweet guide I too
Was after them impell'd, so much the might
Of her sole nod my nature could subdue.
Never below, where Nature doth incite
Things as they rise and fall, was any motion
So swift as to be equall'd with my flight.
As to that holy triumph of devotion,
Reader, I would return, for which my sin
I mourn, and smite my breast with grieved emotion,
So quick thou ne'er didst put thy finger in
The fire and draw it out, as I the sign
That follows Taurus saw, and was therein.
O glorious constellation,[1] lights that shine
Pregnant with rarest virtue, whence, I see,
I draw whate'er of genius may be mine;
With you was rising, and with you set he,
The father of all life of mortal kind,
When first I breathed the air of Tuscany;[2]
And then, when grace was granted me to find
Entrance to that high sphere in which ye roll,[3]
Yours was the region as my lot assign'd.
To you devoutly now I breathe my soul,

that, without a miracle, he would interpose to remove the corruptions of Christianity and to reform the Church.

[1] The constellation Gemini.

[2] The Sun was in the constellation Gemini at the time of Dante's birth, May 14, 1365.

[3] The eighth heaven, the region of the Fixed Stars.

That I celestial virtue may acquire,
For the hard pass which draws me to its goal.
"Thou art so near the object of desire,
Thy final bliss, that eyes more sharp and clear,"
Said Beatrice, "it will of thee require.
And therefore, ere thou further enterest here,
Backward look down, and see beneath thy feet,
How thine own world already doth appear.[1]
So that, far as it can, thy heart may meet
More gladly the triumphant crowds that come
Through this ethereal round with joy complete."
I turn'd me round, and let my vision roam[2] [eyes
Through the seven spheres, and smiled that in mine
So paltry seem'd the globe which is our home!
And that man's counsel as the best I prize
Who rates it lowest: he whose thoughts elsewhere
Are centred, I regard most truly wise.
I saw Latona's daughter shining there,[3]
Without that shadow which of late between us
I had supposed was caused by dense and rare.[4]

[1] "Look downward on that globe whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected shines.
That place is earth." *Paradise Lost*, iii. 722.

[2] "Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorn'd
Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon." *Ibid.* ii. 1046.

[3] *Diana*, the Moon. [4] Canto ii. 60.

Here thy Son's aspect,[1] with no shade to screen us,
Hyperion,[2] I endured, and saw how move
Near him revolving, Mercury and Venus.[3]
From thence I saw the temperate star of Jove[4]
'Twixt Sire and Son;[5] and thence to me was clear
Their various aspects as they circling rove:
And all the seven to me were made appear,
Their size and grandeur, and how swift and terse
Their motions, and how distant each bright sphere.
This petty nook for which we are so fierce,[6] 151
As with the eternal twins I roll'd was shown;
From hills to sea-ports all my glance could pierce;
Then to her beaming eyes I turn'd mine own.

[1] His vision had been so strengthened that he could now gaze undazzled on the sun.

[2] Hyperion, the fabled son of Cœlus and Terra, married Thea, by whom he had Aurora, Apollo (the Sun), and Diana (the Moon). The poets often confound him with the Sun.

The Greek name has been so completely Anglicised, that it would seem pedantic to accent it Hyperíon.

"Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself."

"——— That was to this
Hyperion to a Satyr."—*Hamlet.*

"Doth rise and help Hyperion to his horse."—*Henry* V.

[3] Dante, for the convenience of rhyme, puts the mothers' names Maia and Dione, instead of the children's. For the same reason, we employ the names which he intended, and by which the two planets are actually known.

[4] See Canto xviii. 68. [5] Between Saturn and Mars.

[6] This little garden-plot of which we are so covetous and proud, although, says Plato, we are but worms in the mould. Our poet has taken the thought from *Boethius*, ii. 7.

As the whole habitable earth, or "great dry land," is visible to Dante, we must suppose him above the meridian of Jerusalem, which was then thought its centre. See *Inferno*, xxxiv. 113–115, and notes.

CANTO XXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Dante sees Beatrice gazing towards the south, as if expecting something new. The glorious triumph of Christ suddenly appears, followed by the Virgin Mary and her attendants, amidst the acclamations of heaven. The sight, which would otherwise have proved overpowering, the Poet is strengthened to bear, till it has mounted beyond the reach of his vision. He remains with Peter and other glorified Saints of the Old and New Testament.

As midst her leafy home the bird abides,
  Resting above the nest of her sweet young,
  And through the darksome night, which all things hides,
Doth for a sight of their loved aspect long,
  And for their nurture to find fitting cates,
  Pleased with the toils which to her task belong;
She on her branch the hour anticipates,
  With ardent passion looking for the Sun,
  And with fix'd gaze the break of day awaits:
'Twas thus my lady stood, erect, like one
  Attentive, turning to that coast her eyes,[1]

[1] Towards the South; for when the Sun is on or near the meridian, his course appears less rapid than when ascending from the East, or declining towards the West; because then, without any intervening objects for comparison, the eye judges his *distance* to be *less*. For the same reason his disc then appears of less extent.

Where the Sun's car doth with least swiftness run.
Her look suspense and longing testifies,[1]
Whence I, like one who for some novel scene
Is eager, grew, and whom hope gratifies.
But no long period had elapsed between
My waken'd expectation and the sight
Of heaven that beam'd with still increasing sheen,
When Beatrice cried, "See those armies bright
That swell Christ's triumph,[2] all the harvest see
Raised by these rolling spheres for this delight."[3]
Her aspect now all glowing seem'd to me,
Meanwhile so full of joys her eyes were seen,
To pass it undescribed my plan must be.
As, in the moonlight calm, night's radiant queen
Diana[4] smiles amid her nymphs eternal,
Which heaven adorn through all the blue serene,
High o'er a thousand lamps that shone supernal,
I saw a Sun[5] from which their light they gain,
As ours lights up yon starry host nocturnal:[6]

[1] "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come."—*Rev.* xxii. 17.

[2] See *Inferno*, iv. 54.

[3] See *Inferno*, xxvi. 24; *Purgatorio*, xxx. 109—111; and *Paradiso*, xvii. 76, &c.

[4] "Trivia," a name of Diana, because, on account of her triple form, she was supposed to preside over all places where three roads met. See *Inferno*, x. 81, note. Diana and her "Nymphs" are mythological personifications of the Moon and stars.

"Where is the light, the splendour
The Sun's bright chariot bore?
The Moon too through the ether
Her lamp? Where her swift nymphs,
Who rode through the obscure?"

EURIPIDES, *Supplices*, 995. Ed. Barnes.

[5] "The Sun of Righteousness." [6] See Canto xx. 6, and note.

Through the transparent living light amain
His lucid substance shone intensified,
So that my powers could not the sight sustain.
"O Beatrice! my sweetest, dearest guide!"[1]——
She said, "What so doth now thy sight o'erpower
Is virtue from whose beam no screen can hide.
There is the wisdom and there is the power,[2]
That open'd the new path from earth to heaven,
Which once delay'd so long its welcome hour."[3]
As fire escaping from the cloud when riven
Dilates and launches here and there its flame,
And 'gainst its nature down towards earth is driven;
Even so amidst those dainties grew my frame
Of mind more great beyond herself, but how
She knows not, nor can tell what she became.
"Open thine eyes, and what I am see thou;
For thou hast seen things which enable thee
To view my smile and to endure it now."
I felt like one awaking when that he,
Finding his dream forgotten, tries in vain
To bring it back to his own memory.
When I this proffer heard, worthy to gain
Such thanks, as from the volume where is found
The past, it ever may unrazed remain.
Should all the tongues of poets most renown'd
Through Polyhymnia's and her sisters' grace,[4]

[1] He is hindered from saying more by the insufferable light, which cut short his thoughts, and overwhelmed him with amazement.

[2] "Christ (is) the power of God and the wisdom of God."—1 *Cor.* i. 24. [3] See *Heb.* x. 19, 20.

[4] The Muse of Song and Rhetoric, and the inventress of har-

Fed with their sweetest milk, to aid me sound,
Not by a thousand would it reach the case,
To sing that sacred smile 'twere not enough,
Nor even to describe her saintly face.
Thus tracing Paradise we leap the rough,
So that our hallow'd poem will resemble
The traveller who finds his way cut off.
But they who think what weighty things assemble
To form the load my mortal shoulders bear,
Would scarcely blame if under it I tremble.
No puny bark should this wide ocean dare,[1]
Which now is furrow'd by my venturous prow,
Nor asks a pilot who himself would spare.
"Why of my face enamour'd so art thou,
And turn'st not that fair garden to survey
Under the rays of Christ so blooming now?
There is the Rose[2] where once incarnate lay
The Word Divine; and there the Lilies bright[3]
Whose fragrance draws men into the good way."[4]
Thus Beatrice: and I led by the light
Of her wise counsels, prompt to move as they do,
For a fresh struggle turn'd my aching sight.
As through a cloud-rift, on a flowery meadow
I oft have seen a single sunbeam dart,
Lighting it up, mine eyes meanwhile in shadow;

mony; described as veiled in white, with a sceptre in her left hand, her right raised as if to harangue, and a jewelled crown on her head. Her sisters are the other Muses.

[1] See the commencement of Canto ii.

[2] The Virgin Mary.

[3] The Apostles.

[4] The fragrance of their pure lives and holy teaching.

Thus into view more throngs of splendour start,
Lighten'd by ardent flashes from on high,
Unseen the source which did those rays impart.[1]
O Power benign, who dost thy stamp apply,
Thou didst exalt thyself that I might brook
The sight, which else to view no power had I."
The name of that fair flower which I invoke[2]
Both morn and evening ever, wholly held
My thoughts, while on the larger fire I look.[3]
And as mine eyes that living star beheld,
Which did in size and lustre all excel
In heaven above, as she on earth excell'd,
From out the sky a blazing taper fell,
Shaped circularly like a crown it show'd,
Which cinctured, and around her wheel'd as well.
The melody of which earth is most proud,
Which can the most attract us and inspire,
Would seem the harsh rending of a thunder-cloud,
If match'd against the music of that lyre

[1] "The unapparent fount of glory" was Christ, who had withdrawn upwards; otherwise Dante would have been unable to discern anything besides.

[2] There is neither scriptural nor rational ground or warrant for invoking the name of Mary; for she is neither omnipresent nor omniscient! But possibly the undue honours paid to her by the Church of Rome have tended to detract from the honour which is really due to her memory, as the Mother of our Lord.—*Luke* i. 48, 49. But the doctrine of her *perpetual* virginity, to say the least, is not necessary to the perfection of her character, much less the novel and heretical dogma of *her* "immaculate conception!"

[3] Christ having retired out of the Poet's view, Mary was the greatest light visible to him: a severe, but probably unintentional satire on Romish Theology and its practical result.

By which the lovely sapphire then was crown'd,
Whose azure gems the heaven we most admire.[1]
"I am the angelic love, revolving round
The exalted joy breathed from the virgin womb,
Which was of our Desire the inn renown'd;
And shall wheel round thee, while in this thy home,
Lady of heaven, thy Son thou followest, making
Diviner still this empyrean dome."
The melody its circulation taking
Now closed, and all those other lights that shine
Shout Mary's name, the resonant echoes waking.
The regal mantle,[2] of the volumes nine
The amplest, all the world embracing wide,
Most warm and living in God's breath and shrine,
Held high above us its interior side,
So distant, that, from thence where I gave heed,
Thereof as yet no gleam could be descried.
No power my eyes had, therefore, to succeed
In following that crown'd flame for ever blest,
Who upward soar'd nigh to her conquering Seed.
And as an infant stretches towards the breast

[1] Which adorns the Empyrean.

[2] The song being ended, Mary mounts to the highest sphere, near to her divine Son; but the immense distance from the place of triumph to the Empyrean prevents Dante from being able to follow her with his eyesight. The poet was in the eighth sphere, between which and the Empyrean the Primum Mobile, or Crystalline, intervened, which, as being exterior to the rest, he describes as a royal mantle, in which the others are folded up and contained, and which, according to the Ptolemaic philosophy, is a heaven of flame or luminous matter, and is more swift, influential, and divine, than they, but still diaphonous or transparent.

His little arms, that he the milk may drain,
His eagerness by outward signs express'd;
So of those white ones upward each did strain
His summit, whence their high regard for Mary
To me was by their attitude made plain.
Then in my presence keeping stationary,
Regina Cœli[1] they so sweetly sung,
The joy it wrought in me will never vary.
How can the abundance be described by tongue,
Which these most wealthy treasure-chests contain,
From whence on earth good seed the sowers flung.[2]
Them here the treasures gladden and sustain,
Which they in Babylonian exile won
Weeping, and leaving there contemn'd its gold.
Here triumphs under God's exalted Son
And Mary's, for his victory—with the old
And also with the new assembly—one
Who doth the keys of so much glory hold.

[1] This hymn is sung from the Compline of Holy Saturday to the Nones of the Saturday before Whitsunday. The following is a translation:—

"Queen of heaven, rejoice, Alleluia,
Because of him thou wentest to bear, Alleluia,
He rose, as he said, Alleluia;
Pray to God for us, Alleluia.
Be glad and rejoice, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia,
Because the Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia."

Breviarium Romanum: Ed. Paris, 1838.

[2] The Psalm which celebrates the return of Israel from Babylonish captivity and exile, concludes with these words, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."—*Psalm* cxxvi. 5, 6.

CANTO XXIV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Peter, appearing in glory, addresses Beatrice, who introduces Dante to him, requesting him to undertake the examination of the Poet, for the glory of the Faith. Dante is accordingly questioned by the Apostle, on the nature and grounds of FAITH, and the evidence of its truth. He testifies his approbation of Dante's answers.

"O YE elected guests who solemnise
The banquet of the blessed Lamb in heaven,[1]
So that your every wish it satisfies;
to this man through grace divine is given
This antepast of what your feast bestows,
Ere from the world he has by death been riven,
Regard the wish immense that in him glows,[2]
And shed some dew upon it; ye for aye
Drink from that fount whence what he pants for flows."[3]
Thus Beatrice: and those blest spirits gay
Grew spheres, and on fix'd poles revolving hie,[4]
And dazzlingly like comets blaze away.
And as in clock-work, to the observant eye,

[1] *Matt.* xxii. 2, 3; *Luke* xiv. 16.

[2] "I have immortal longings in me."
SHAKSPEARE, *Ant. and Cleop.* act v. sc. 2.

[3] *Rev.* vii. 17.

[4] See Canto viii. 19—21.

The wheels move round, yet are adjusted so
That the first seems at rest, the last to fly;
Thus, as they danced, their various carols[1] show
How variously the wealth of heaven they share,[2]
By estimate of motion swift or slow.
From one of these whose beauty was most rare,[3]
I saw a fire proceed, so dazzling bright
That none was left of more effulgence there.
And thrice round Beatrice its living light
It wheel'd with so divine and sweet a song,
That Fancy to recall it faileth quite:
My pen must skip it then, and pass along.[4]
Such folds imagination cannot trace,[5]
Much less can speech, their colour is too strong.[6]
"O saintly sister mine, that with such grace
Hast pray'd, such sway thy ardent longing bore,
Me doth it from yon radiant sphere displace."
When that blest flame had given its motion o'er,
Its breath directing towards my lady so,

[1] "*Quelle carole.*" *Carola* is a dance, a country dance. This dance and its name were originally Neapolitan. *Carolare* is the corresponding verb. Our word *carol*, used both as a substantive and a verb, is French, and doubtless, like so much besides, "came over with the Conqueror."

[2] See Canto xxiii. 130, 131.

[3] The Apostle Peter. [4] See Canto xxiii. 62.

[5] The same bold metaphor may be found in PINDAR, who speaks of adorning the name and exploits of Hiero "in the renowned *folds* of Song (ὕμνῳ πτυχαῖς)." He refers to the *Strophes*, turns or varieties.—*Olymp.* i. 169, 170.

[6] Bright colours are unsuitable in representing the *folds* and shading of drapery. So here, the description, if it were even possible, would be too bright and dazzling, and would offend.

As I've related, was its utter'd lore.
And she, "O light that dost for ever glow
Of that great man to whom Christ left the keys[1]
Of this blest realm, which he had borne below;
This man examine, as thou best mayst please,
On points both light and grave which faith concern,
The faith by which thou walkedst on the seas.[2]
If he is right, no need hast thou to learn,
For there where all things are beheld portray'd,
His love, and hope, and faith, dost thou discern.[3]
But since this realm her citizens hath made
By the true Faith, him well the turn will suit,
That glory be thereto by converse paid.
Then as a bachelor[4] stands arm'd and mute,
Until the master's question finds expression,
To prove him, not to settle a dispute;
Thus, musing on each topic in succession,
I arm'd me, while she spake, to be prepared
For such a questioner, and such profession.
"Good Christian, speak; be thy belief declared:
Say, what is Faith?" Then towards the light whence
This interrogative my brow I rear'd; [came
Then turn'd to Beatrice, and that fair dame
Prompted me by her looks my thoughts to express,
That so the stream its fountain might proclaim.
"The grace which bids me now my faith profess
Before the high Commander," I replied,

[1] *Matt.* xvi. 19. [2] *Matt.* xiv. 28—31.

[3] The examination was not necessary for Peter's information, to whom the state of Dante's mind could not but be known.

[4] A young student at the University. In this and the following line we have an allusion to the degrees of B.A. and M.A.

"May it assist my thoughts and words no less."
Adding, "As hath been, Father, certified
By the true style in thy dear brother's hand,[1]
Who Rome with thee did in the good way guide,[2]
Faith is the substance of things hop'd for, and
The evidence of things not seen;[3] and hence
Its nature[4] I can clearly understand."
Then heard I, "Rightly thou hast hit the sense,
If well thou know'st why faith he doth expound
As substance first and then as evidence."
Then I replied; "The essences profound
Which here have to my sight been fully shown,
Are so conceal'd from eyes on earthly ground,
That they exist there but in faith alone,
On which is built our hope's high excellence.
And hence 'tis by the name of substance known.
And holding this belief, we must from thence
Our reasoning, not from view direct, conclude,
So that it holds the place of evidence."
The voice then said, "If thus were understood
Whate'er as doctrine is received below,
The sophist's cleverness would ne'er delude."
So gently breathed the love-enkindled glow,
And then subjoin'd; "Enough dost thou rehearse
The weight and goodness of this coin to show.
But tell me, if thou hast it in thy purse?"[5]

[1] 2 *Peter* iii. 15. [2] *Romans* i. 7—16; xv. 28, 29.

[3] Heb. xi. 1. We see how much Dante preferred the teaching of the apostles to that of the most eminent of the post-apostolic fathers, by the higher place which he assigns them in heaven, and by the importance which he attaches to their sayings.

[4] "*Sua quiditate.*" See Canto xx. 92, and note.

[5] Between a correct notion of what faith is, and the possession

I answer'd, "Yes; and that so bright and round,
As of its mintage must all doubts disperse."[1]
This breathing issued from the light profound
There shining; "Of this precious gem explain,
Of every virtue the essential ground,[2]
Whence comes it?" I replied, "The abundant rain
Of the Holy Spirit, free and bountiful,
Shed on the old and new, the covenants twain,[3]
Is argument which brought conviction full,
So sharply too that, in comparison
Therewith, all demonstration seems but dull."
Then heard I this: "The old and new which won
To their contents thy firm conviction so,
Wherefore dost thou as heavenly teaching own?"
"The works which follow'd serve the truth to show,"
I said, "since for them Nature ne'er procured
The iron's heat, nor struck the forming blow."[4]
Thus he replied; "Say, how art thou assured
Such works were done? Who testifies to thee?
What thou wouldst prove, thou hast in proof adjured."
"Had the world turn'd to Christianity,"
Said I, "without these miracles, this one

of it, there is as much difference as between the skill of an accountant and the possession of actual wealth.

[1] "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1 *John* v. 10.

[2] "Without faith it is impossible to please God," *Heb.* xi. 6.

[3] See 2 *Tim.* iii. 16; 2 *Pet.* i. 21.

[4] The miracles wrought by Moses and the Prophets, and by Christ and his apostles, transcended the ordinary operations of nature, and were wrought as evidences of Divine Power, and in attestation of a Divine commission.

Were such, all else would scarce a hundredth be.[1]
For poor and fasting thou didst enter on[2]
The field to set the goodly plant, when young
A vine, but now 'tis to a thornbush gone."
This ended, through the spheres "*Te Deum*" rung
From the high court, "Before one God we bow!"
In melody such as above is sung.
And that great baron[3] who from bough to bough
Had led me so in my examination,
That we approached the furthest branches now,
Again commenced; "The grace whose inspiration
Thy mind holds dear, thy mouth hath open'd too,
So that thus far that gains my approbation
Which, when 'tis open'd, thence emerges through.
But now what thou believest let me hear,
And why 'tis offered to thy faith as true?"
"O holy sire, O spirit, who seest appear
What thou believèdst, so as to outgo
More youthful footsteps to the sepulchre;"[4]

[1] Christianity originated in the Augustan age, the most philosophical and critical age of antiquity. That it should in such an age have prevailed, and that the world should have been brought to believe those things which the Evangelists relate, without miracles, would, as observed by Chrysostom, Augustine, and others, have been the greatest of all miracles.

[2] See Canto xxi. 127—129.

[3] "*Quel barone.*" This title, applied to the Fisherman of Galilee, may appear a great step in worldly promotion, but what is this, compared with the claim of his pretended successor to the *Regalia*, or "Royalties of St. Peter?"

[4] "John also says, that he (Peter) entered *suddenly* when he came to the sepulchre, seeing another disciple stand lingering at the door." DANTE, *De Monarchiâ.*

Thus I began; "Thou wouldst that I should show
The form of my prompt creed, and dost require
That its occasion too I let thee know.
And thus I answer; With belief entire
I own one God, eternal, sole, unmoved,
Who moves all heaven with love and with desire.
Nor is this creed by reason only proved,
Physics and metaphysics, but the clime
Celestial shower'd on me the truth approved,
By Moses, and the Prophets, in old time,
The Psalms, the Gospel, and by what you penn'd,
After the Holy Ghost made you sublime.
I own Three Persons in one Essence, bend
To the Eternal Mind, so one, so trine,
That it allows the *are* and *is* to blend.
And this reveal'd profundity divine,
Which now I touch on, to my heart has given
And seal'd the Evangelic doctrine mine.
This is the root, the spark, whose fiery levin,[1]
Wide-spreading, kindles to a vivid flame,
And in me sparkles like a star in heaven."
As when a master hears his servant name
What pleases him, he doth embrace him straight,
For his good news when he hath told the same;
Thus, when I ceased, the Apostolic light
At whose command I spoke, to bless me raised
His voice in song, and with his presence bright
Thrice girt me, so much had my answer pleased.[2]

[1] "With wildè thonder dint and firy leven."
CHAUCER, *Wif of Bathes Prologue.*

[2] St. Peter, as a disembodied spirit, could not embrace Dante, who says that the apostle *cinse*, girt, or circled him round.

CANTO XXV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Saint James discourses with Dante on Hope. Unlooked-for splendour announces the presence of John the Evangelist and Apostle, who informs the poet that his dead body was yet on earth; and that only two had been received in the body to Paradise. Overcome with the lustre of the beloved Apostle, Dante cannot perceive the presence of his guide.

Should it e'er happen that the sacred strain,
Towards which both heaven and earth assistant are,[1]
And which for many a year hath made me lean,
Shall foil the cruelty which me doth bar
From where a lamb I slept, that sheepfold fair,
Foe to the wolves which now thereon make war;[2]
With other voice and fleece than I had there
Shall I return—a poet, on the font
Baptismal to receive the laurel crown:[3]
Because the faith which into God's account

[1] Have furnished materials, because the action of the whole *Trilogy* has for its theatre the Universe.

[2] *Psalm* cxx. 7.

Timon, retiring, exclaims:

"Let me look back upon thee, O thou wall,
That girdlest in those wolves! Dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens!"

Shakespeare. *Timon*, act iv. sc. 1.

[3] He anticipates his future triumph and renown as a poet.

Inducteth souls, 'twas there I enter'd, and
So circled Peter for this faith my front.[1]
Then towards us moved a light from that bright band
Whence issued he, the first whom Christ our Head
Of all his vicars left for him to stand.[2]
And joyfully to me my lady said,
"Look! look! behold the Chief on earth renown'd,
For whom Galicia there is visited."[3]

[1] See Canto xxiv. 154, and *Rom.* iv. 3—8.

This favorite doctrine of Dante's, which was that of St. Paul, was also the doctrine of St. Peter, as any one may see who will consult St. Peter's discourses and epistles; and it is the doctrine of the Reformation.

[2] 2 *Cor.* v. 20.

[3] St. James the Elder is recognised by the Spaniards as their Patron Saint. The tradition is very ancient, that this apostle first preached the Gospel in their country, and was interred at Iria Flavia (now El Padron) on the borders of Galicia; and that his relics, having been discovered by a star pointing out the place of their interment, were removed, by order of Alphonsus king of Leon, to Compostella (quasi *Campus Stellæ*, the field of the Star), also denominated from the apostle, Santiago, to which place Leo III. removed the Seat of the Diocese. The place is still famous as the resort of pilgrims to the stately Cathedral, where the body of the Saint is said to be enshrined.

Rejecting all that is impossible in the Spanish tradition, let us consider what residuum of historical truth it may contain. Spain having been for 400 years one of the most flourishing provinces of the Roman empire, with 360 large cities, nothing is more probable than that Christianity was planted there in the Apostolic age, if not by an apostle. Allusions to the early and extensive spread of the Gospel are contained in the writings of St. Paul (see Col. i. 6, 23), who himself, projected a journey into Spain; *Rom.* xv. 24, 28. Clement, his companion, says of him, that having taught the whole world righteousness, and for that pur-

As when beside his mate a dove is found,
Both show the mutual fondness which they bear,
Cooing while they each other circle round;

pose travelled to the utmost bounds of the West, he at last suffered martyrdom. Tertullian, about the middle of the second century, includes among the nations who have believed in Christ, "all the boundaries of the Spaniards." *Adv. Jud.* cap. 7. And Leocadia is mentioned as a martyr in Spain under Diocletian, A.D. 304. Yet the tradition recognises, not Paul, but James as the apostle of Spain. The possibility that James the son of Zebedee and brother of John the Evangelist was such, is precluded by his early martyrdom, which took place about A.D. 44 (*Acts* xii. 1, 2), while the Apostles yet remained at Jerusalem, and before they had extended their labours beyond Judea. Nor could it have been James, the brother of our Lord, surnamed the Just, whose martyrdom, recorded by Josephus, took place A.D. 62, and who up to that time was constantly found at Jerusalem, *Acts* xii. 17; xv. 13; xxi. 18; *Gal.* i. 19; ii. 9, 12. It seems therefore exceedingly probable, that he who planted the Gospel in Spain was James, the son of Alphæus (or Clopas), commonly called James the Less, who was one of the Twelve Apostles. The arguments, although not free from all difficulty, are very strong in proof that he was *not* the same individual as James the Just, so often mentioned in the New Testament as one of the four brethren of our Lord, who were probably the younger sons of Joseph and Mary, or the sons of Joseph by a former wife. If these two Jameses were distinct, as we believe, the tradition may be true that the Apostle James first preached the Gospel in Spain, and was buried there; and this is rendered the more probable by the fact that, while history distinctly informs us of the martyrdom of James the brother of John, and James the brother of our Lord, the Spanish tradition supplies us with the *only* account extant of the apostolic labours and death of James the son of Alphæus.

It can hardly be conceived at present how great was the resort of pilgrims, during the Middle Ages, to the shrine of Saint James

'Twas thus I saw salute each other there
Those princes great and glorious, and proclaim[1]
How blest the banquet which above they share.
But when their salutation ceased, each flame
Silent, before me standing, still I note,
So glowing that the blaze my sight o'ercame.
What Beatrice then said smiling here I quote;
"Famed soul, whose pen of this blest sanctuary

(Santiago) of Compostella. The attraction appears to have equalled that of Rome and Jerusalem. Piers Ploughman describes the Pilgrim, as having

"On his hat seten (set) signes of Synay,
And shelles of Galice (Galicia),
And many a crouche (cross) on his cloke,
And keys of Rome, and the vernicle (veronica) bi-fore,
For men sholde knowe and se by hise signes
Whom he sought hadde." *Vision.* ll. 3544, &c.

In his *Convito*, Dante says, the common people called the Galaxy, "the way of St. James." That is, the Milky Way was considered a sign by night to direct pilgrims who were going to the Shrine of St. James of Galicia. We still retain a relic of this custom, in the Grotto formed of Oyster-shells, and lighted with a votive candle on old St. James's Day (August 5), when the passer-by is earnestly entreated to "Remember the Grotto!" In London, oysters are only allowed to be sold after St. James's Day, July 25, N. S. A writer in *Notes and Queries* tells us that formerly, on this anniversary, poor persons were in the habit of erecting such grottoes, as a memento, and an invitation to the pious who could not visit Compostella, to show their reverence for the Saint, by assisting their needy brethren with alms.—Vol. i. 1st series, p. 6. A tax of twopence was formerly levied by the City of London on every person going and returning by the river, on pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. James, each of whom wore a shell in his hat.

[1] Peter and James.

The joy and happiness,[1] divinely wrote,[2]
Of Hope in this high place treat audibly.
Thou know'st her, who as oft her scribe hast been,[3]
As Christ shone brightest to the favour'd three."
"Lift up thy head: whate'er from thy terrene
And mortal world ascendeth hither, know,
Must here be ripen'd by our light serene."
Thus from the second flame did comfort flow
To me, whence to the hills I raised mine eyes,[4]
Which from the weight of glory erst bow'd low.[5]
"Since it is will'd that thou through grace shouldst
Ere death, to see our Emperor face to face, [rise,
In his most secret Council of the skies;
That having seen the truth of this high place,
The hope, which stirs good love below, may find
In thee and others, more confirm'd its base:
Say what it is, and how in thine own mind
It flourisheth, and whence it came to thee."
'Twas thus the second light my task assign'd.

[1] Some editions read *la larghezza*, largess.

[2] The epistle was not written by St. James the brother of John, but by St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, and brother of our Lord.

[3] Peter, James, and John, who were considered in Dante's time the standing types of Faith, Hope, and Charity (*Purgatorio* xxxii. 76, note). The occasions on which they were selected to behold what the other disciples were not permitted to witness, were, the raising of Jairus' daughter, *Mark* v. 37; the Transfiguration, *Matt.* xvii. 1—8; and his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, *Mark* xiv. 33.

[4] *Psalm* cxxi. 1.

[5] A Hebraism. The Hebrew words כָּבוֹד *glory*, and כֹּבֶד *weight*, are both from the same verbal root, כָּבַד *to be heavy*. Hence St. Paul speaks of "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 *Cor.* iv. 17.

And that fair dame who guided pityingly
My pinions to the height which I had won,
In answering, thus anticipated me:—
"The Church now militant hath not a son
More full of hope, as in that Sun 'tis writ,
Whose radiance our whole army shines upon.
To him Heaven therefore hath conceded it,
From Egypt come, Jerusalem to see,[1]
Ere else the rules of warfare would permit.
Those other two points, which are ask'd that he
May—not inform thee, but—report below,
How much this Christian virtue pleases thee;
To him I leave; not hard for him to show,
Nor cause of boast: let him respond to it;
And may God's grace thereto its aid bestow."
As pupil to his teacher answer fit
Will make, prompt, willing, where he has well-read,
Because 'twill show his learning and his wit;
"Hope is an expectation sure," I said,
"Of glory to endure immortally,
From grace divine and previous merit bred.[2]
From many a star this light comes down to me:
But in my heart he dropp'd it first whose breath
Raised the chief song to heaven's Chief Majesty.[3]
And 'Let them hope in Thee,' his anthem saith,
'Who know thy name, O Lord!'[4] and who can be

[1] Coming from earth to visit heaven, before his dismissal from the probationary state. See *Purgatorio* ii. 46—48, and note.

[2] "For hope is the expectation of future blessedness, arising from the grace of God, and out of previous merit."—PETER LOMBARD, *Sent.* lib. iii. dist. 26.

[3] David.

[4] "Et sperent in te, qui noverunt nomen tuum."—*Psalm* ix. 10.

Without this knowledge, if he has my faith?
Then thou thy dew hast sprinkled so on me
In thy epistle,[1] that I rain your rain
On others, fill'd myself so copiously."
While thus I spake, within the breast amain
Of that same burning did a tremulous lamp
Quick frequent flashes, lightning-like, maintain.
Then breathed: "The flame of love which nought can damp
Still for that virtue which hath follow'd me,
Until I gain'd the palm and left the camp,
Bids me, for thy delight, breathe audibly
Thereof: and it will give me pleasure too,
To hear thee tell what Hope doth promise thee."
I said, "The ancient Scriptures and the new,
Concerning souls whom God hath reconciled,
Have signified what I before me view.
Isaiah says that in the land he styled
Their own, each shall put on a double vest;[2]
And their own land is this, the life so mild.
And more at large thy brother hath explain'd,
There where he treats of the white robes on high,[3]
The revelation here made manifest."
And ere I had these words quite ended, I
Heard cry above us, "*Let them hope in thee:*"[4]
To which at once all caroll'd a reply.
Then shone a light among them brilliantly,

[1] The only ground for the selection of James as the Apostle of Hope, is the tradition which assigns the three principal graces to the three favoured apostles respectively; a *conceit* originally derived from the Paulicians, whom the Church of Rome regards as heretics. See *Purg.* xxxii. 76; xxxiii. 78, and the notes.

[2] *Isaiah* lxi. 7, 10.

[3] *Rev.* vii. 9.

[4] Line 74, note.

So that if such a crystal were in Cancer,
One winter month a single day would be.[1]
And as, when rising up to join a dance, are
The motions of a maiden gay, to grace
The bride, and no improper end to answer;
So I that splendour saw come to the place
Where those two lights, as loving and beloved,
Revolved together in the circling race,
Then join'd their song and dance and with them moved.
Then did my lady with fix'd look survey,
And like a bride stood silent and unmoved.
"Lo, this is he who on the bosom lay[2]
Of our true Pelican, whose dying lore
Did from the cross great charge to him convey."[3]
So spake my lady, nor did she the more
Her fix'd attention from that sight remove
After she spoke than she had done before.
As he who looking at the Sun above
When partially eclipsed, to gaze will dare,
May even the loss of sight by seeing prove;[4]
Such I became through that last splendour there:[5]

[1] At the winter solstice the sun is in Capricorn, and the nights in the northern hemisphere are at their longest. The opposite sign, Cancer, then rises as the sun is setting, and if such a luminary as Dante describes were to shine in Cancer during the month following there would be no interruption of daylight, and the whole month would be as a single day.

[2] St. John. See *John* xiii. 23, xxi. 20. [3] *John* xix. 26, 27.

[4] "——— When we greet
With eyes best seeing heaven's fieryeye,
By light we lose light."
SHAKESPEARE, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, act v. sc. 2.

[5] Doubting whether St. John's *body* were there. See *John* xxi. 20—24.

Meanwhile one said, "Why dost thou dazzle thee
To see what hath no place in this high sphere?
On earth is earth my body, and will be,
Laid with the others, till our numbers grow
To equal what the Eternal doth decree.
With their two garments in this cloister go
Two lights alone[1] who hither have ascended
And this report bear to the world below."
The flaming circle, when this voice had ended,
Grew quiet, and the dulcet sounds were still,
Which from the triple breath till now had blended;
As when to rest them, or suspecting ill,
Who strike the water with their oars, the men
All pause when sounds the whistled signal shrill.
Ah! what emotion seized upon me, when
I turn'd me round to look at Beatrice,
That I could nowhere see her! yet I then
Was near to her, and in the world of bliss!

[1] The allusion probably is to Enoch and Elijah, the only two instances on record of translation without death. Nothing is known of the death of Mary, and her "assumption" is a fiction which was never heard of till the sixth or seventh century. Alban Butler says, "In the eighth century St. Willibald was shown, in the Valley of Jehosaphat, her tomb, *which was empty*." This evidence is very negative indeed, and would equally apply to Scipio and the builders of the Pyramids. But, says the same author, "it is a traditionary pious belief, that the body of the Virgin was raised by God (let not the reader mistake this for *the oath* of a witness!) soon after her death, and *assumed* to glory, by a singular privilege, before the Resurrection."—*Lives of Saints*, iii. 397, note. We think the usual phrase is slightly misapplied, the assumption being, not that of the Virgin, but entirely that of her admirers.

CANTO XXVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Dazzled with the contemplation of St. John, Dante doubts whether his eyesight is not entirely gone; but is reassured by the Apostle, and by him examined on LOVE or CHARITY. Then his sight is restored by Beatrice, and he holds discourse with Adam, who describes the state of innocence, its brevity, and his exile, in consequence of his disobedience to the Divine command; how long he remained in Limbo before ascending to Paradise, and what was the primitive language of mankind.

WHILE I was doubting for my vision spent,
There issued from that blinding flame intense
A sound soft-breathed, which made mine ear intent.
It said, "Until thou shalt regain thy sense
Of sight, which through thy gaze on me hath fled,
'Twere well that converse make thee recompense.[1]
Begin, and tell me where thy thoughts have sped:
Meanwhile I'd have thee fully understand,
Thy vision, though bewildered, is not dead.
For she who leads thee through this heavenly land,
Hath in her look such virtue as below
Was once possess'd by Ananias' hand."[2]
I answer'd, "At her pleasure, swift or slow,
Relief come to mine eyes, which were the gates

[1] See *Inferno* xi. 13, 14. [2] *Acts* ix. 17, 18.

She enter'd with whose fires I ever glow.[1]
The good which satisfies these blissful states,
Is Alpha and Omega to the text
On which to me Love more or less dilates."[2]
The self-same voice which, when I was perplex'd
By sudden dazzling, did my fears relieve,
Invited me to further converse next.
And said, "Thou certes through a finer sieve
Must pass; and say who to thy bow when bent
To such a mark did its direction give?"
Then I: "Each philosophic argument,
And that authority which hence descends,[3]
Impress'd my heart with love thus vehement.
For good, as good perceived, itself commends
To love, and will our love the more excite,
The more of bounteousness it comprehends.
Then to that Being so divinely bright,
That whate'er good besides is to be loved
Is nothing but a ray of his own light,
More than towards any other should be moved
The loving mind of each who can discern
The truth by which this doctrine may be proved.
He shows me this when to his page I turn,
From whose instruction, what the First Love was
Of all the eternal substances, I learn.[4]

[1] "——— I feel this youth's perfections,
With an invisible and subtile stealth,
To creep in at my eyes."—SHAKSPEARE, *Twelfth Night*, i. 5.

[2] "God is Love."—1 *John* iv. 16. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."—*Rev.* i. 8.

[3] Both Reason and Revelation.

[4] "Love is a deity mighty and wonderful among men

He shows it whose true words which all surpass,
To Moses said, when of himself he spake,
'Before thee I'll make all my goodness pass.'[1]
Thou show'st me too, who dost commencing make
On earth announcement of Heaven's mystery,[2]
Above all tidings else its place to take."
Then heard I say, "By man's philosophy,
And Revelation, which therewith accords,
Thy love supreme keep for the Deity.
But say if yet thou feel'st not other cords
Drawing thee towards him, so that thou make mention
What ties to bind thee else that love affords."[3]
Not latent here was the devout intention
Of Christ's own eagle,[4] rather I well knew
On what he wish'd me to bestow attention.
And I resumed: "All the strong links that drew
My heart, and made it turn to God alone,
Have with my charity concurrence too.
Because the world's existence, and mine own,

gods, and not the least on account of his origin; for to be one of the oldest of the gods is a thing said to his honour."—Phædrus in the *Banquet*, PLATO's *Works*, vol. iii. 486, 487.

[1] *Exodus* xxxiii. 19.

[2] The sublime Gospel of St. John, which commences with the doctrine of the mysterious and incarnate Word.

[3] "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with the lovingkindness have I drawn thee."—*Jer.* xxxi. 3. "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love."—*Hosea* xi. 4.

[4] The Eagle is the well-known artistic symbol of St. John the Evangelist—the Son of thunder, who like an eagle rising from his eyrie, soars on strong and rapid pinions above sublunary things gazes on the splendours of the Almighty's throne, and surveys the broad expanse of earth, tracing the stream of time till it is swallowed up in the ocean of eternity.

The death which to procure my life he bore,
That hope to me and all the faithful known,
Besides the living knowledge told before,
Have drawn me from the sea of guilty love,[1]
And landed me upon the rightful shore.
The leaves that flourish in the verdant grove
Of the eternal garden, freshly sprung,
As far as they partake his good, I love."[2]
When I had ceased, a most sweet song was sung,
In which my lady join'd, and throughout heaven
The anthem "Holy, holy, holy," rung.[3]
And as when sudden light our sleep has driven,
The eyes' quick spirit moves anew to greet
The splendour which from coat to coat is given,[4]
And what we see, thus roused, we loathe to meet,
So uninform'd our sudden waking is,
Until the judgment yield its aid complete;
Thus from mine eyes all mists did Beatrice
Chase with the beams which, darting from her own,
More than a thousand miles, were bright with bliss.
Hence clearer than before my sight was grown,
And in astonishment I question made
Of a fourth light which near us newly shone.
"Within those radiant beams," my lady said,
"Admires his Maker the first human soul[5]

[1] From being tossed on the tempestuous waves of licentious and guilty passion.

[2] "The saints that are in the earth, and the excellent, in whom is all my delight."—*Psalm* xvi. 3.

[3] *Isaiah* vi. 3; *Rev.* iv. 8.

[4] The light which penetrates through the coats or tunics and humours of the eye to the retina.

[5] Adam.

In whom creating power was e'er display'd."
As on the top of some high branching bole
The leaf bends to the wind, and then is raised
Through its own virtue, which sublimes the whole;
Thus while she spoke I downward bow'd amazed,
Then my renew'd assurance vanquish'd awe,
So strong the wish to speak that on me seized;
And I began: "Sole fruit whom Eden saw
Mature when first produced; O ancient Sire,
Whose daughter each bride is and daughter-in-law,[1]
To thee, devoutly as thou canst require,
I sue; thou seest my wish: thy voice to hear
The sooner, I express not my desire."
If you wrap up an animal, whene'er
He moves, the attendant motion of the vest
Will show it, and his temper thus appear;
And in like mode that primal spirit blest
Show'd through the covering sheen transparently,
How great his joy to answer my request; [thee,
Then breathed these words: "Though not inform'd by
More clearly I discern thy wish untold,
Than thou whate'er thou know'st most certainly.
In the true mirror I the same behold,
Which in his image fashions other things,
Yet nothing him can in its image mould.[2]
Thou wouldst be told, how long since mid the springs
God station'd me, of that high garden blest,

[1] Daughter of Adam by natural de… daughte… as married to one of his sons.

[2] Lit. "Who makes other thing… self,
And nothing makes him … lf."
Parhelion, a mock sun, an image of th… m vapour

Whence thee thy guide up this long staircase brings;
And how long I its happiness possess'd;
And the true cause of that great penalty;
And in what language I my thoughts express'd.
Now, O my Son, the tasting of the tree
Not of itself my cause of exile proved;
It was my breach of law exclusively.[1]
There,[2] whence thy lady towards thee Virgil moved,
Four thousand and three hundred rounds and two
Of yonder Sun, I craved this court beloved.[3] 120
Him, turned to all the lights, I saw pass through
His pathway broad nine hundred and thrice ten
Times, while my vital breath on earth I drew.[4]
The speech I used became confounded then
Ere Nimrod's race employed their strength and skill
On what was unachievable by men.[5]
For each effect of human reason still,
Through human fancy, always fond of change,

[1] "Sin is the transgression of the law."—1 *John* iii. 4.

[2] Limbo. See *Inferno* ii. 53.

[3] *Inferno* iv. 54, 55, note.

[4] "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."—*Gen.* v. 5.

It will be observed that the period from the creation of Adam to the birth of Christ is made by Dante much longer than the common computation, which is founded on the modern text of the Hebrew Bible. The Septuagint makes it 5508 years, and Josephus (as corrected by Hales) 5411 years. The longer period is corroborated substantially by St. Luke in his Gospel, and by the Fathers of the first five centuries of the Christian era. Dante comes nearer the longer th[illegible] years to the Crucifixion, that [illegible] to the birth of Christ.

[5] "This form of speech Adam used

Following the heavens, was never durable.[1]
Speech is a natural work of man—the exchange
Of thoughts; but in what language it shall sound,
Nature leaves to your choice an ample range.
Ere I descended to Hell's gulf profound,[2]
We named Him EL who is the Sovereign Good,
From whom the joy descends that wraps me round.
Then ELI as his name the meetest stood;[3]
For custom is with mortals, as we see,
Like leaves incessant in vicissitude.[4]
I in the mount most lofty from the sea,
Was, both while pure and when the wrong I chose,
From prime till the sixth hour, when changefully
The Sun into his second quadrant goes."[5]

the building of the Tower of Babel."—DANTE, *De Vulg. Eloq.* lib. i. cap. vi.

[1] See DANTE, *De Vulg. Eloq.* lib. i. cap. ix.

[2] See *Inferno* ii. 53.

[3] EL is the Hebrew name of God, ELI signifies "My God." See *Matt.* xxvii. 46.

El appears to have been, in fact, a more ancient name of the Deity than JEHOVAH, and Dante, in his treatise *De Vulg. Eloq.*, says the first name of God was El, and that St. Isidore, after St. Mark, affirms that the "second name was Eloi," or, according to St. Matthew, *Eli*.

[4] "As leaves in the wood are changed with fleeting years,
The earliest fall off first; so words perish with age,
And recent ones flourish and thrive, like men in their youthful days."—HORAT. *Ars Poet.* 60—62.

[5] Petrus Comestor, in his *Historia Scholastica*, says of our First Parents, "Certain authors tell us that they were but seven hours in Paradise."—Fol. 9, ed. Par., 1513, 4to. The opinion, however, must be entirely conjectural, and appears very improbable.

CANTO XXVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The *Gloria Patri* sung: the smile and joy of Paradise. The blush of St. Peter and his companions, while he inveighs, with holy shame and indignation, against the wickedness of Boniface and the Roman Court. The three Apostles and Adam pass upwards out of sight, and while Dante contemplates the smile of Beatrice, he ascends with her from the eighth to the *ninth heaven*, whose motion and influence she explains, and condemns the degeneracy of the times.

"GLORY to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,"[1]
All Paradise began to sing; a strain
So passing sweet my senses reel'd to hear it.[2]
I saw the universe a smile maintain,
So it appear'd; for my inebriate bliss
Through eyes as well as ears did entrance gain.
O joy untold, where no delight we miss!
O life entire, where love and peace o'erflow!
O wealth secure, beyond all wishing this!
Before mine eyes with love-enkindled glow
Stood the four lights;[3] and that which first had loom'd,

[1] At the conclusion of Dante's examination by the three chief Apostles, the heavenly host express their satisfaction by singing the *Gloria Patri*.

[2] "Intoxicated with eternity."—BYRON, *Works*, p. 326.

[3] Peter, James, John, and Adam.

More brilliant than before began to grow;
And such appearance had indeed assumed
As Jupiter would have, if Mars and he
Were birds and with each other's feathers plumed.[1]
The Providence which their high ministry
In the blest choir doth order and arrange,
On all sides round had hush'd their minstrelsy.
When thus I heard: "Thou needst not think it strange[2]
If I change colour; for, while I recite,
All these too thou wilt see their colour change.
He who on earth usurps, against all right,
My place, my seat, mine office, which is void
Before the Son of God, and in his sight[3]
Hath made my tomb, with lust and slaughter cloy'd,
A common sewer of blood and filth, whence he
Who fell from heaven in hell is overjoy'd."[4]
That hue which by the opposing sun we see

[1] If the white star of Jupiter became fiery red, like Mars.

[2] Dante takes this occasion to put the final seal of infamy on the memory of Boniface VIII., the reigning Pope in 1300, the date of the Vision.

[3] "And here he directs his indignation against Boniface, who by simony was elected Pope in 1294, and he repeats three times 'my place,' to show how enflamed he was against him; and he says that the said place, that is, the Papal seat, is vacant in the sight of God, because the election of Boniface was not legitimate." —*Ottimo Commento.* See *Inferno* xix. 53, and note.

[4] Boccacio, in the tale of Giannotto di Civigni, describes the Jew Abraham as visiting Rome for the purpose of studying Christianity, and there he sees the Pope, cardinals, and other prelates, and the whole of the Papal Court, plunged in the grossest vice, and guilty of crimes, both natural and unnatural, without either restraint or shame.—*Decam.* Giornata prima, Nov. 2.

Limn'd on the cloud, when eve or morning glows,[1]
Then saw I o'er all heaven spread vividly.[2]
And as a modest lady, who ne'er shows
Fear for herself, but still assured remains,
When others' faults she hears of timid grows;
Thus Beatrice in aspect was obscured,
And such eclipse I think there was in heaven,
When pain was by the Power Supreme endured.[3]
Then with so changed a voice his words were given,
As he the facts proceeded to unfold,
Not greater change had mark'd his aspect even.
"The Spouse of Christ was not bred up of old
With mine, and Linus's, and Cletus' blood,[4]

[1] "That colour with which the clouds are usually tinted
By the stroke of the opposing sun, or the purple morning,
Such was that in the countenance of Diana seen without her garment."—OVID, *Metam.* iii. 183—185.

[2] All heaven blushes, and might well blush, at the wickedness perpetrated in Rome by those who pretend to act in its name.

[3] In allusion to the supernatural darkness at the time of our Lord's crucifixion.—*Matt.* xxvii. 45.

[4] "According to the forged Roman *Pontifical*, containing the supposed lives and pretended decrees of the early Popes, which forms the basis of most subsequent catalogues of the Roman Pontiffs, Linus was the immediate successor of St. Peter in the See of Rome, Cletus next; Sixtus or Systus is reckoned the eighth, Pius the eleventh, Calistus or Calixtus the seventeenth, and Urban the eighteenth. Linus is mentioned by St. Paul in his epistle from Rome to Timothy, 2 *Tim.* iv. 21; but Bishop Pearson has proved that Linus died before Peter, and therefore, if Peter was the first Bishop of Rome, Linus could not succeed him. Tertullian, Rufinus, and Epiphanius say that Clement (mentioned by Paul, *Phil.* iv. 3) succeeded Peter. Jerome declares that "most of the Latin authors supposed the order to be Clement the successor of Peter." But Irenæus, Eusebius, Jerome

That she might basely serve to gather gold;
But to acquire the blest life here bestow'd,
Sixtus, and Pius, good Calixtus, and
Urban their blood pour'd forth, whose tears had flow'd.
We did not mean that of the Christian band
A part should on the right their station have
Of our Successors, part on their left hand;[1]
Nor that the keys, which unto me Christ gave,
Should e'er the symbol of a banner be
In battle against Christian men to wave;[2]
Nor on their seal that they should sculpture me
Their vended lying pardons to allow,[3]
For which I blush and sparkle frequently.[4]

himself, and St. Augustine, say Linus succeeded Peter. The Roman catalogues make Cletus third, and Anacletus fifth in the succession. Yet Bishop Pearson proves that these were two names of the same person, and Ignatius (contemporary with Anacletus), Irenæus, Eusebius, St. Augustine, and Optatus, omit Cletus, which is but an abbreviation of Anacletus, placed by Eusebius immediately after Linus in the succession of Roman Bishops. —See POWEL *On Apostolic Succession*, pp. 207, 208.

[1] By his patronage of the Guelfs and persecution of the Ghibelines, the Pope, instead of being the father of Christendom, had become the mere head of a party.

[2] See *Inferno* xxvii. 86, and note.

[3] "Or thou mayst be some pardowner, with his budget of reliques from Rome, forgiving sins at a penny a dozen and one to the tale."—Sir W. SCOTT's *Monastery*.

CHAUCER describes the "gentil pardonere," as "Bret-ful of pardons come from Rome al hote," &c.—*Prologue to Canterbury Tales*.

[4] In Dante's time St. Peter blushed for shame at the deeds of his successors and their Court. Matters do not appear to have been much improved in "Leo's golden days," when "a Raphael painted and a Vida sung," if we may trust the *Centum Gravamina*

Rapacious wolves in shepherds' garments now
Through all the pastures from this height are seen.[1]
Vengeance of God, why longer sleepest thou!
To drink our blood Cahorsians, Gascons keen
Themselves prepare![2] O entrance excellent,
To what vile close dost thou thyself demean!
But that high Providence that Scipio sent,
Rome the world's glory scathless to maintain,[3]

of the German Catholic Princes, or the anecdote related of one whose name is a synonym for descriptive genius. "It is said that while Raphael was painting the head of St. Peter in the Sistine Chapel, two of his friends, who were cardinals, and not remarkable for the sanctity of their lives, were conversing with him, when one of them remarked that the colouring was much *too red*. To which Raphael replied, with that graceful gaiety which obviates offence, 'May it please your eminences, the holy apostle *is blushing in heaven*, as he certainly would do, were he now present, to behold the Church he founded on earth governed by such as you.'"—JAMESON'S *Memoirs of Early Italian Painters*, vol. i. p. 228. There can be little doubt that the youthful painter had this passage of the Florentine poet in view.

[1] *Matt.* vii. 15; *Acts* xx. 29.

[2] John XXII., elected Pope A.D. 1316, was a native of Cahors. He canonized Thomas Aquinas, and entered into a contest with Lewis of Bavaria, afterwards emperor, whom he pretended to depose; in return for which Lewis caused Peter de Corbieri to be elected Pope, who assumed the name of Nicholas V., and crowned the emperor in Rome. In the coffers of John were found after his death, "twenty-five millions of florins, of which eighteen millions were in *specie*, and the rest in plate, jewels, crowns, mitres, and other precious baubles, all which he had extorted from the people and the inferior clergy during his pontificate."—FLEURY, *Ecc. Hist.* xciv. 39. Clement V. was a Gascon, of whom see *Inferno* xix. 83, and note. He was elected in 1305, and died in 1314.

[3] Dante says, in his *Convito*, that in the war with Hannibal,

Will aid her soon, as I deem evident.
And thou, who dost thy mortal weight sustain,
And wilt return below, speak out, my son,
And hide not what I have to thee made plain."[1]
Like frozen vapour when it hath begun
In snow-flakes to descend, what time the horn
Of heaven's she-goat is touch'd by yonder Sun;
Soaring in triumph thus I saw adorn,
Like snowy vapours, the ethereal scene,
Those who with us to sojourn there had borne.
Mine eye still follow'd up through the serene,
Until their semblance faded on my sight,
Which could no more o'erleap the space between.
Whereat my guide, who saw that I had quite
Given over looking upward, said, "Now bend
Thy looks below, and mark thy circling flight."
Now from the hour when first that view I kenn'd,
I saw that I had moved through all the arc[2]
From the first climate's middle to its end;
Hence, that side, Cadiz, where Ulysses' bark
Took his mad flight, on this, the shore where thou

after the overthrow at Cannæ, the Roman dominion would have ceased if Scipio had not, through Divine Providence, undertaken for her deliverance the invasion of Africa.

[1] "Blessed Peter.....spoke much, and taught me out of the Old Testament. Concerning men of our own age, yet living, he thundered forth to me many sins, and commanded me that those things which I had heard I should report."—*Vision of Alberic*, sect. 45.

Did ever Luther thunder forth a stronger invective against the papacy, with its vended and lying indulgences and dispensations, than that which Dante here puts into the mouth of Peter?

[2] Since he had last looked, when ascending to the constellation Gemini, Canto xxii. 133, six hours had passed, and he had

Europa, the sweet burden madest, I mark:[1]
And of this petty nook more had, I trow,
Been then disclosed, but that a sign and more
Under my feet the Sun had journey'd now.[2]
The enamour'd mind, which dally'd evermore
With my dear lady, to bring back mine eyes
To her, was now more eager than before.
If all that nature or that art supplies
To catch the eye and so secure the mind,
In human beauty or the painter's dyes,
All when united I should nothing find,
Match'd with the bliss divine which turning there

been carried by the motion of the heavens through ninety degrees, from the meridian of Jerusalem to its western horizon.

[1] Dante being now in a part of the heavens above the *horizon* of Jerusalem, which passes through the west of Spain, sees on the one hand Cadiz and the Straits of Gibraltar, and on the other the Phœnician shore, where Europa, daughter of Agenor, was carried off by Jupiter disguised in the form of a bull.—See *Inferno* xxvi. 103—109, and Ovid, *Metam.* ii. 836—875.

[2] The ancient geographers divided the habitable earth into seven climates, by circles north of the equator and parallel thereto. The first clime (that of Meroë) extended 20° north latitude, and 120° from east to west, the whole supposed extent from ocean to ocean, bisected nearly by the meridian of Jerusalem. Gemini is about 20° north of the equator, and therefore Dante's motion with that sign corresponds with 90° measured on the earth's surface, from the middle to the western extremity of the first climate.—Pollock.

Dante is viewing the earth ("this petty nook") from Gemini, and the sun is in Aries, with Taurus interposed. Hence the whole of the earth's hemisphere visible from Gemini is not illuminated by the sun's rays; but the earth so seen would appear something like the moon at five days after the full, and Dante cannot see the dark part.—*Ib.*

I felt, caught from her smile that on me shined.
The virtue of that glance beyond compare
Rapt me at once from Leda's lovely nest,[1]
And up into the swiftest heaven did bear.[2]
Its parts most living and sublimely blest
Are so alike, I cannot say what place
To fix on for me Beatrice thought best.
But she who my unutter'd wish could trace,
Commenced with smiles and such exulting cheer,
That God's own joy seem'd shining in her face:[3]
"The nature of the motion, whose career
The centre stills, and to move round constrains
All else, as from its goal commences here.[4]
No place but God's own mind this heaven contains;
The love that moves it in that mind alone
Is kindled, and the influence which it rains.[5]
Pure light and love surround it in one zone,
As this the other spheres; this utmost bound
Only to Him who girdles it is known.
No other metes its rapid motion round,

[1] Castor and Pollux, the two bright stars in Gemini, were named after the two sons of Leda by Jupiter, who deceived her in the disguise of a swan.—Ovid, *Metam.* vi. 109. Hence Dante calls this constellation her "nest."

[2] Into the ninth heaven, the swiftest of all, called the Primum Mobile or Crystalline. Dante in the *Convito*, says that its velocity is incomprehensible, through the fervent desire of each part to be joined with the Empyrean, within which it revolves.

[3] An allusion to the radiance of Moses' face when he came down from Sinai.—*Exod.* xxxiv. 29—35.

[4] Motion *begins* here; for the Empyrean, which is beyond it and contains it, is *immovable*.

[5] "——— Ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence."—Milton, *L'Allegro*.

But measured by this one are all the rest,
As five and two of ten are measures found.
And how in such a vessel thus possess'd
Time holds his roots, in other spheres its leaves,[1]
Must now to thee be fully manifest.
O thou Cupidity, thy gulf receives
And whelms mankind, which of all further power
To look above thy waves their eyes bereaves.[2]
In men the will bears many a blooming flower,
But constant rains the blossom spoil when blown,
Changing the good plums into wild and sour:
For faith and innocence are found alone
In children, but they take their flight full soon,
Ere on the cheeks the manly down has grown.[3]
One, while yet lisping fasts till afternoon,
Who when his tongue can plainly speak will eat
Of every food alike through every moon.
And one, who lisps, will his dear mother have
In love and reverence; when his talk is right,
He but desires to see her in her grave.
So the skin darkens, that before was white
At first appearing of some daughter fair
Of him who brings us day and leaves us night.[4]

[1] Time could neither be measured nor comprehended without motion, and as motion was believed to commence with the primum mobile, Dante describes it under the figure of a tree, as having its roots there, and its leaves, or subordinate parts in the other spheres visible to us.—BIAGIOLI.

[2] "O the degeneracy and folly of human nature, which, through the love of transitory things, will not lift up itself to the contemplation of things eternal and divine!"

[3] *Matt.* xviii. 3.

[4] The allusion probably is to the effect, on a fair complexion,

But that thou mayst not marvel, be aware
That now on earth to govern there is none,
And hence the human race are wandering there.[1]
But ere from winter January's quite gone,
Through the below neglected hundredth day,[2]
These upper spheres will thunder in such tone,
That Fortune, look'd for, after long delay,
Will turn the poops where are the prows, and speed
The fleet, which shall aright pursue her way,
And to the blossom good fruit shall succeed."

of exposure to the sun in a southern climate. See *Song of Songs*, i. 4—6.

[1] See *Purgatorio*, vi. 82—151.

[2] The Calendar, as reformed and adjusted by Julius Cæsar, which made the year to consist of 365 days 6 hours, and intercalated a day in the February of every fourth year, was that in use in Dante's time, This reckoning had a slight error, which in every hundred years amounted to nearly a day in excess of the true computation: so that at the date of the vision the winter solstice had advanced about 7 days, 18 hours, 9 minutes. Gregory XIII. in 1582, when it had advanced ten days, caused that number of days to be thrown out of the current year, between October 4th and 15th; and to make the civil year in future agree with the precise time which the sun takes in his annual progress to reach the same point in the ecliptic=365 days, 5 hours, and nearly 49 minutes, he ordained that every hundredth year, except the four hundredth, should not be a leap year, so that the difference will not amount to a day in less than 5200 years.

It would have taken more than 2500 years from the date of Dante's vision, as the calendar then stood, to bring the first of January a whole month onward, and a time proportionally longer to throw that month out of winter. Dante's, therefore, was a *safe* prediction; but he is generally understood to speak here ironically of a very long period, to indicate a comparatively short one. The prediction has been fulfilled in the REFORMATION.

CANTO XXVIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Dante, still in the ninth heaven, sees the Divine Presence in its manifestation as a dazzling point, surrounded by the nine choirs of the celestial hierarchy. Some doubts and difficulties which had arisen in his mind are elucidated by the explanation which Beatrice gives him.

When she who had imparadised my mind,[1]
Against the present life the truth had brought,
Of that sad state which wretched mortals find;[2]
As of a taper's flame a glimpse is caught
By one on whom it from behind doth shine,
Before he has it in his view or thought,
And turns to see if it the crystalline
Truly reports, and finds them well agree,
As notes in music with fit verse combine;
Thus is recorded in my memory
What chanced while on those eyes a gaze I took,
Whence Love composed his cord for taking me.[3]

[1] The metaphor employed by Milton and admired by Addison (*Spectator* 285) is here anticipated by Dante.

"Imparadised in one another's arms."

Paradise Lost, iv. 506.

[2] In the speech of Beatrice, at the end of the preceding Canto.

[3] "For your beautiful eyes, lady, have bound me"—that is, have made me prisoner, have taken me captive.—PETRARCH.

And as I turn'd, mine own received a stroke
From what that open volume still displays,[1]
To those who on its circle sagely look.
One point I saw[2] from which there stream'd such rays
Of brightness that the sight on which it beams
Must needs be shut against the o'erpowering blaze.
And any star which from the earth least seems,
Would seem a moon, if it were placed by this,
As one star close beside another gleams.
A halo round a light in heaven's abyss,[3]
Tinging the densest mists that intervene,

[1] Heaven, especially the ninth heaven, the Crystalline or Primum Mobile.

[2] It was one of the fancies of the Mediæval schoolmen, to represent the Divine Eternity by a moment, because it has no succession, and the Omnipresence of God by a point, because it is indivisible and without dimensions. See Canto xxix. 20, and note.

Dante had seen, reflected in the eyes of Beatrice, this representation or concentration of the Divine Glory, shining with the intensest lustre, and he now turns round to gaze on the reality.

Beatrice is here the personification of revealed wisdom and truth. "For we all, with an unveiled face, reflecting as mirrors the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Spirit of the Lord."—2 *Cor.* iii, 18. *Macknight.*—The Greek word κατοπτριζόμενοι, being in the middle voice as well as the passive (which in this case are alike) may bear either this sense or that of our authorised version, "Beholding as in a glass." Perhaps it is to be understood both in a passive and an active sense: "Receiving and reflecting in the manner of a mirror, the glory of the Lord." In this passage there is an allusion to the light which issued from the face of Moses, when it was not veiled, on his coming down from the steep of Sinai.

[3] A circle seen in misty weather round the sun or moon. See Canto x. 69, note.

Appears about as far from it, I wiss,
As round this point a ring of fire was seen,[1]
Whose revolution much more swift was found
Than swiftest sphere around our globe terrene.[2]
And this was by another girdled round,
That by a third, round which a fourth ring went,
A fifth ring that, and that a sixth surrounds;
Then the seventh follow'd, of such wide extent,
That Juno's envoy, if complete she were,[3]
To compass it would be incompetent.
So too the eighth and ninth; and these appear,
As from the One increasing, to pursue
Their journey each with motion tardier.
And that one had the purest flame in view
Whose distance from the bright spark least extended,
Since grown, I think, more truly like thereto.
My lady, who perceived the care that blended
With my uncertainty, said, "From this point
Heaven and the whole of nature are suspended.[4]

[1] Around this point the angels move in nine revolving circles corresponding to the nine heavens.

[2] Than that of the Primum Mobile.

[3] If the rainbow were completed so as to form a circle. See *Purgatorio*, xxi. 50, and note. A daughter of Thaumas and Electra, one of the Oceanides, messenger of the gods, and especially of Juno (the air). This poetic fable of the rainbow may be a version of *Gen.* ix. 8—17.

[4] Homer describes Jupiter as letting down the golden chain from heaven, and drawing therewith to himself the earth, sea, and atmosphere, together with all the gods and goddesses.—*Iliad*, viii. 23—27.

"From that beginning depend heaven, and earth, and nature." ARISTOTLE, *Metaph.* lib. xii. c. 7.

Observe that circle next with it conjoint,
And know, what spurs it to this motion swift
Is burning love which nought can disappoint."
To her I said, "Had our world but the gift
Of order such as in those rounds I note,
That would suffice, nor further would I sift.
But all things in the world of sense denote
That in proportion more divine they prove
As they are from their centre most remote.[1]
Hence that my wishes may no longer rove
Within this wondrous and angelic temple,[2]
Which for its bounds has only light and love,
I need an explanation yet more ample,
Why text and copy differ so; for I
Untaught contemplate vainly this example."
"If such a knot unable to untie
Thy fingers are, it is not marvellous;
'Tis grown so firm through backwardness to try;"
So spake my lady, and proceeded thus;
"Listen, if willing to be taught thou art,
And wisely let thy mind my words discuss.
The spheres which test your astronomic art
Are wide or strait as they have more or less
Of heavenly virtue spread through every part.

[1] According to Dante, the material world (the copy) and the spiritual world (the pattern) differ in this, that the spheres of the latter are more swift the nearer they are to their centre, whereas with the former the contrary is the case. This is according to the erroneous astronomical system of Ptolemy, which supposes the centre of our globe to be the centre of motion to the sun, moon, and stars.

[2] The ninth heaven, only bounded and encompassed by the Empyrean.

The more of good, the more of happiness
It hath, and hence a larger mass it keeps,
If all its parts an equal share possess.[1]
Wherefore this heaven whose quick rotation sweeps
With it all nature, to that ring is found
Answering, which most of love and wisdom reaps.
If to the substances revolving round,
Not to their seeming, thou thy scale of sense
Apply, but to their virtues which abound,
Thou'lt see a wonderful coincidence,[2]
Of more to greater and of less to less,
Between each heaven and its intelligence."
As bright and calm remains in loveliness
The hemisphere of air, when Boreas blows
From his puff'd cheek with greatest gentleness,
Because the mists which troubled its repose
Are chased away, and heaven with smile serene,
And all her train, their beauties now disclose;
So alter'd was with me the mental scene,
Through what my lady had so clearly shown,

[1] Dante says, that in the material world the more ample the body, the greater is the good of which it is capable, supposing all parts to be equally perfect; but that in the spiritual world the circles are more excellent and powerful, the more they approximate the central point, which is God.

[2] He says, that if you judge by the endowments of the angels who preside over the respective orbs, and not by the size of their circles, you will find a wonderful conformity between those orbs and their presiding intelligences respectively. Thus:

The Primum Mobile is under the Seraphim; the sphere of the Fixed Stars, Cherubim; that of Saturn, Thrones; Jupiter, Dominations; Mars, Virtues; Sun, Powers; Mercury, Archangels; the Moon, Angels.

And as a star in heaven the truth was seen.
And when her words in that reply were done,
As iron sparkling boils when liquefied,
The circles of that heaven with sparkles shone,
Each spark that follow'd glow'd intensified:
And such their number that it mounted higher
Than doubled chess-squares up to millions plied.[1]
I heard "Hosanna" sound from choir to choir [Him,
Towards the fix'd point, which holds them near to
With sweet attraction, endless and entire.
And she who saw the doubtful thoughts and dim
Within my mind, spoke thus: "The circles prime
Have shown thee Seraphim and Cherubim.
Thus swiftly round the point their path sublime,
To be as like it as they can, they bend,
And still their power and lofty purpose chime.
Those other loving ones that round them wend[2]
Are call'd the Thrones—of Him for ever blest,
Since here the primal ternary they end.
And know, that by them all is joy possess'd,
Proportion'd to their view profound into
The truth in which each intellect finds rest.
And hence the act of seeing we may view
As that from which the blest life doth proceed,
Not that of loving, which comes next thereto.[3]

[1] "The allusion is to the well-known story of the reward asked from the king of Persia, by the inventor of the game of chess, who wanted a grain of wheat for the first square of the board, two for the second, and so on. The number arrived at on the last, or sixtyfourth square, by this process of duplication, extends to twenty places of figures."—POLLOCK.

[2] See Canto ix. 61, 62, and note.

[3] Dante refers to the scholastic question: Whether blessedness

And the degree of vision is the meed [cherish,
Which Grace brings forth and good will helps to
And thus from step to step they onward lead.
The other ternary which thus doth flourish,
In this blest clime of sempiternal spring,
Which nightly Aries cannot cause to perish,[1]
Perpetually their Hosanna sing
With triple melodies, in orders three,
Which make with triple joy heaven's arches ring. 120
Three ranks divine are in this hierarchy,
First Dominations, Virtues next survey,
And the third order Powers are said to be.
Two choirs penultimate, the Princedoms they,
And the Archangels, join in dance exact;
The last are angels all in blissful play.
These orders gazing upward, and in fact,
Prevailing downward are, and hence towards God
All are attracted, and they all attract.
And Dionysius with such longing glow'd,[2] 130

consists in the vision of God, or in love? and he decides in favour of the former view.

[1] At the autumnal equinox, when the sun is in Libra, the opposite sign Aries, which rises at sunset, presides over the night, when the frosts of winter commence. Hence Dante calls him nightly or nocturnal Aries, and ascribes to his influence that earthly ruin of vegetation which the climate of eternal spring shall never undergo.

[2] See Canto x. 117, and note. Dante regarded the *De Cœlesti Hierarchiâ* as a genuine work of Dionysius the Areopagite, and accordingly received its doctrines as of almost apostolical authority, he having been a convert of St. Paul, and personally acquainted with him. Such a work, if genuine, must have been well known in the first three centuries, whereas the total silence respecting it of all the ancient ecclesiastical writers is fatal to its

Studying these orders to contemplate, he
Named and distinguish'd them, as I have show'd.
But Gregory from him thought differently:[1]
Yet when his eyes unclosed in this high sphere,
Himself he then regarded smilingly.
If mortal man on earth a truth could clear
So secret, marvel not, though strange it sounds;
To him One made it known who saw it here,
And much besides respecting these bright rounds."[2]

credit. Eusebius and Jerome, who made exact catalogues of all the authors they knew, have not mentioned it. Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, and others, mention Dionysius, but have given no intimation of his books. This could not have happened had they been genuine, especially as they would have been of great importance and authority in the controversies in which those fathers were engaged.—See Du Pin, *Hist. Ecc. Writers.*

[1] St. Gregory the Great, in his enumeration, departs from the order expressed by the pretended Dionysius, to the extent of a simple interchange of rank between the Virtues and the Principalities.

[2] The *vas electionis*, Paul (see *Inferno*, ii. 29, and note) was "caught up to the third heaven," "caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable things, which it is not lawful for man to utter." But here he is supposed to have told them to Dionysius, and through him to the world, for the author of the books ascribed to Dionysius "affects to seem to have lived in the time of the Apostles."—Du Pin.

CANTO XXIX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Beatrice, perceiving that in Dante's mind some doubt and difficulties had arisen, asserts the disinterested beneficence of the Creator, and explains the order of Creation, the history of the Angels, and the fall of part of them from heaven. She pronounces a severe invective against those Preachers who forsaking the Holy Scriptures, had substituted their own inventions for Evangelical truth, and against the Pope's false pardons and indulgences. The bounty and perfection of the Divine nature.

When both Latona's children,[1] in the signs
Respectively of Aries and the Scales,
The same horizon like a zone confines,
Long as from while they're poised, ere one prevail,
Till from that cincture both alike set free,
Changing their hemisphere the balance fails:[2]
So long did Beatrice wait silently,
With a sweet smile depicted on her face,
Her gaze fix'd on the point which vanquish'd me.[3]

[1] Apollo and Diana, or the sun and moon.

[2] When the sun is in Aries and the moon in Libra, as at the time of Dante's vision, they are for a short space of time opposite to each other, and seem to hang as if poised in even scales, in opposite points of the same horizon. But this can continue scarcely more than an instant before they change their hemispheres and the equilibrium is broken.

[3] See Canto xxviii. 16—18.

"I speak, yet ask not what thine ear would trace,[1]
  For there I've seen it," thus commenced the dame,
  "Where is appointed every time and place.
To gain good for himself was not his aim,
  Which cannot be; but that his glory might
  By its refulgent rays I AM proclaim.[2]
In his eternity, ere time's first flight,
  Uncomprehended, as it pleased him, so
  In new loves came the Eternal Love to light.[3]
Not that before it lay inactive; no:
  For no before or after then could be,[4]
  Ere on these waters God moved to and fro.[5]
Form join'd with matter, and in purity,[6]
  Issued in act in which no failure was,
  As from a three-stringed bow three arrows flee.
And as a ray in crystal, amber, glass,
  So shines, that from the time it enters in,

[1] Dante felt but had not expressed a desire to know the outgoings of the Eternal One, displayed in the creation of angels, as to the time, the place, and the manner of it.

[2] "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."—*Exod.* iii. 14.

[3] *Rev.* iv. 11.

[4] "Nothing is there to come, and nothing past,
  But an eternal Now does always last."
COWLEY, *Davideis*, i. 361-2.

[5] *Gen.* i. 2.

[6] "Simple and unmixed *form* answers to 'pure intelligence,' (puro atto) line 33, the highest of created being; simple and unmixed *substance* answers to 'brute force,' (pura potenzia) l. 34, the lowest; and form mixed with subtance, to 'power and intelligence' (potenzia con atto), l. 35, that which holds the middle place between the other two."—CARY.

Till 'tis gone through, no interval can pass;
Thus did the triform fair effect begin[1]
From its great Sire, whose rays the whole dispense,
Without distinction in its origin.
Their order concreate with their excellence,
The substances were made that fill this round,
The topmost, where dwells pure intelligence:
Mere power the lowest in the scale is found;
Power and intelligence were midway placed,
Held fast by links that cannot be unbound.
Jerome has told you, that long ages traced[2]
Their course, when angels had created been,
Ere earth was made or nature firmly based:
But what I've said, on many a page, I glean,[3]

[1] If Dante's commentators have not misunderstood him, his philosophy is here at fault. All things in heaven and earth, spirit and matter, angels, men, and brutes, were not created at once, and without any interval of time between the creation of one and the other. But if he meant, either that the ideas of them always existed in the Eternal Mind (see *Proverbs*, viii. 22—31), or that the different orders of angels were created simultaneously, the assertion cannot be disproved.

[2] Jerome, whose opinion seems most probable, though Dante preferred that of Aquinas, says; "Six thousand years of our world have not yet elapsed (this was in the *Fourth* century), and how vast the eternity before! what times, what origins of ages may be judged to have been, in which angels, thrones, dominions, and other powers, served God, and without changes and measures of times, existed rejoicing in God.—HIERONYM, *In. Ep. ad Titum.*

[3] Our poet relies on the authority of Thomas Aquinas, who says, "Angels were created together with corporeal things, for angels are a certain part of the universe. They do not by themselves constitute a universe, but they and the corporeal creation have their place in the constitution of the same universe.

Writ by the penmen of the Holy Spirit,
As, if thou closely look may there be seen.[1]
And Reason's view is also somewhat near it,
As not conceding that these heavenly movers
Should wait so long perfection to inherit.[2]
Now when, and where, and how these hallow'd lovers
Were erst created,—which at once contents
Thy threefold wish,—my speech to thee discovers.
The time which counting twenty represents
Had not elapsed, ere of the angels part
Falling, disturb'd your subject elements.[3]

But no part is perfect when separated from its sum. Therefore it is not probable that God, whose works are perfect (*Deut.* xxxii.), created the angelic order by itself before the other orders of beings."—*Summa Theol.*, P. 1, quest. lxi. art. 3.

We think that a weaker sophism can scarcely be found among all the cobwebs woven by the schoolmen.

[1] The texts usually referred to are *Genesis*, i. 1, and *Ecclus.*, xviii. 1. The former asserts that God created the whole universe, but says nothing about the simultaneous creation of angels and other creatures: on the contrary, as explained by the rest of the chapter, it implies that creation was *not* simultaneous, but in successive acts, with periods of time interposed between them. The latter passage, which is from the *Apocrypha*, is, "He who liveth for ever created all things together (*simul*," vulg.; "in general," Eng. ver).

[2] The argument is, that the angels would have had nothing to do, if they had been created long before the material world, an assumption which does not legitimately follow, even from the scholastic doctrine—a remnant of pagan mythology—that the heavenly bodies are governed by their several intelligences, and that these intelligences are the several orders of angels.

[3] No reason whatever is assigned for the vastly improbable supposition that a part of the angelic host continued not in their first estate *for more than twenty seconds* before they fell! One

The rest, who staid, commenced this heavenly art
Which thou discern'st, and are so gratified,
That never from their circling they depart.
What caused their fall was the accursed pride
Of him whom thou hast lately seen below, [tied.
By the whole world's vast weight press'd down and
Those whom thou seëst here with rapture glow
Did modestly that goodness magnify
Which had ordain'd them apt so much to know.
On which account their ken was raised so high,
That through enlightening grace and their desert,
Their full firm will all peril may defy.[1]
Doubt not then, but believe what I assert;
Receipt of grace hath its appropriate meed,[2]

would suppose that for discontent to arise in the minds of beings created pure, for this to ripen into rebellion, and then for the consequent war in heaven, a much longer period would be requisite—an additional reason in favour of Jerome's theory of the antiquity of angels, and an argument against that of Aquinas as to their recent origin.

Dante's notion here, as well as that in *Inferno*, xxxiv. 121, may have been suggested or confirmed by *Rev.*, xii. 3, 9; but from the context it is evident that although the symbols are taken from the traditional belief in the war of the angels, they are here employed prophetically and figuratively to foreshow the triumph of Christianity over the Paganism of the Roman empire, the subsequent corruption of the Church by the admixture of pagan error through the subtlety and malice of Satan, and the consequent persecution of those who adhered to the pure doctrine and worship taught in the New Testament. Milton has made a much nobler use of this passage than Dante has.

[1] Their period of probation is ended, and they are so confirmed in virtue, as to be henceforth incapable of falling.

[2] "When God sees his creatures disposed to receive his grace,

Far as affection doth itself exert.
Now round thee look, and, if my words thou heed,
With mind attentive this consistory
Thou canst survey, nor other help wilt need.
But in your schools on earth since currently
That the angelic nature, it is said,
Hath understanding, will, and memory,
I will add something further on this head;
That thou mayst see pure truth, which they confound,
Equivocating in such lectures read.
Since from the face of God their joy is found
By these blest beings, thence they turn not theirs,
For none are hidden from his view profound.
Hence no new object to their gaze appears
Attention to distract, nor does aught seem
Needful to stir up memory in these spheres.
Thus men below, although not sleeping, dream,
Believing true or not, what thus they tell;
But in this last more fault and shame we deem.
Not by one path ye go on earth, nor well
Philosophise, but with vain love infested
Of showing off how your own thoughts excel.
Yet even this in heaven is less detested,
Than when the Holy Scriptures are despised[1]
By mortal men, or its plain meaning wrested.
What blood it cost, by you is not surmised,
To sow it in the world, and how much fruit

he infuses it in measure proportioned to that state of preparation."—*Convito*, trat, iv. 21. "Unto you that hear shall more be given."—*Mark*, iv. 24.

[1] *Postposta*, literally, postponed; "left behind; put in a corner." —BIAGIOLI.

Of peace he has by whom 'tis loved and prized.[1]
Each strives to shine and show his wit, and suit
The public taste; by preachers are proposed
Their own inventions, and the Gospel's mute.
One says, the Moon drew back, and interposed
Her orb when Christ was slain, and that the Sun did
Not shine below, his beams thus undisclosed.[2]
Others, that of its own accord absconded
The light, so that the eclipse in Spain and India,
With that seen in Judea corresponded.
Florence has not of Lapi and of Bindi[3] a
Number so great as these with fables swarm,
With which from pulpits yearly ye are dinn'd: yea,
The sheep, who swallow all without alarm,
Know not that they with wind alone are fed,[4]

[1] Dante, himself a diligent reader and great admirer of the Holy Scriptures, did not wish them *concealed*, lest the untaught and unstable should wrest them. He says, that the Apostles sowed them at the cost of their blood, and that they who read and prize them are most pleasing to God. It was the false, though authorised teachers of his day that he charged with wresting them, and substituting their own inventions for the Gospel.

[2] Christ was crucified at the time of the Passover, which was held just after the full moon, so that the darkness "over all the land," for three hours, was not caused by an ordinary eclipse of the sun, which can only happen at new moon.

[3] These names, common at the time, in Florence, are probably abbreviations of more honourable names, Jacopo and Aldobrindi, like the surname Plant from Plantagenet, in our own country.

[4] "The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swol'n with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly and foul contagion spread."
MILTON, *Lycidas*, ll. 125-7.

Yet not excused that they see not their harm;[1]
Christ never thus to his first convent said,
'Go ye and to the world preach trivial jests:'
But he the true foundation gave instead,
And through them sounded so his high behests,
In fight the faith to kindle when they try,
With shield and spear the Gospel arm'd their breasts.
Now clerks with gibes and witticisms aspire
To preach, and if but a loud laugh reply,
The cowl swells up, and more they'll not desire.
But such a bird nests in their hood-band sly,
That did the public see it, they'd not take
The pardon upon which they now rely:[2]
In which world's dotage men such increase make,
That while no proof or evidence they know,
To every promise they themselves betake.
By this the hog of Antony doth grow
So fat; and plenty more than hogs far worse,[3]

[1] The gross corruptions which have prevailed in religion could not have been introduced and become established, either in the older forms of idolatry, or in mediæval superstition, if there had not been in mankind a readiness, a craving, for delusion: "*Populus vult decipi, et decipiatur.*" The first recorded instance of departure from purity of worship among the Israelites, was forced on the *priest* by the *people*.—*Exod.*, xxxii. See *Jer.*, v. 31.

[2] If the wicked spirit were visible, that whispers his counsels into the ear of the priest, the people would not accept his false indulgences and absolutions.

[3] Antony first formed the recluses, who had long existed in Egypt, into a regular body, engaged them to live in society with each other, and prescribed rules for the direction of their conduct, so that he may be considered the Father of the Monastic system and orders. The system passing into Palestine and Syria, and

Paying with money which no stamp can show.[1]
But we have stray'd so far in our discourse,
Our eyes now turn we to the pathway straight,
At once the time to shorten, and our course.
Of this bright host the numbers are so great,
No tongue of mortal man but must have fail'd
To express it, and his thought to reach such height.
And if thou mark what Daniel has reveal'd[2]
Of thousands in his view prophetical,
Thou'lt see the real number is conceal'd.[3]

thence into Italy, gradually extended itself over Europe.—Mosheim, *Ecc. Hist.*, Part ii. cent. iv. chap. ii. sects. 13, 14.

In 1070, the relics of St. Anthony were transferred to the church of La Motte St. Didier, near Vienne in Dauphinè, and a small cell was built in 1089 by the Benedictines of Grammont for the order of Saint Anthony, then established for the relief and support of such as were diseased, especially that those persons might have the benefit of his intercession who were afflicted with Erysipelas, thence called St. Anthony's fire. The members of this order were at first laymen, and not bound by particular vows like other monastic orders, but consecrated to the general service of God. As they grew opulent and powerful by the multitude of pious donations, they withdrew themselves from the jurisdiction of the Benedictines, propagated their order in various countries, and in 1297, obtained from Boniface VIII. the dignity and privileges of an independent congegration under the rule of St. Augustine, called the Regular Canons of St. Anthony.—Mosheim and A. Butler. The Devil is said to have appeared to St. Anthony in the shape of a hog, hence the Saint is often painted with a hog at his feet, and Dante makes the hog a type of the monks, who fattened on the offerings of their deluded admirers.

[1] Others, worse than they, who paid their benefactors with false pardons and superstitious rites, as worthless as money without the legal stamp.

[2] *Daniel* vii. 10.

[3] *Heb.* xii. 22; *Rev.* v. 11 On the subject of angels, the re-

That Primal light which sheds its beams on all,
Is in such various modes by them received,
As there are forms on which its splendours fall.
And hence as by the mind it is conceived,
Affection follows; and the sweets of love,
Lukewarm or fervent, are by it perceived.
Now see thou what the height and breadth must prove
Of that Eternal Might, which form'd such store
Of mirrors, in which broken it can move,
Itself remaining single as before.[1]

ticence of the inspired penmen forms a striking contrast with the loquacity of such writers as the spurious Dionysius. We have no history of them, and no date of their origin. *All* our information consists of scattered and incidental notices in the Sacred Scriptures. "Where wast thou," asks the Creator, "when I laid the foundations of the earth..... When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"—*Job* xxxviii. 4—7. The vast antiquity of the material of which the earth consists, and the successive changes in its condition, previous to the existence of Man upon it, is now generally admitted by men of science; and if the "Motors"—the morning stars, the sons of God, could raise their hymn of joy at the birth of nature, we must ascribe *to them* an antiquity greater than that of nature.

[1] "And as Praxiteles did by his glass, when he saw a scurvy face in it, brake it in pieces; but for that one he saw many more as bad in a moment."—BURTON'S *Anat. Melan.* Pt. ii. sect. 3, mem. 7, p. 420, Ed. Tegg, 1845. Dante says, that the Creator multiplies himself in his intelligent offspring, like an image in so many mirrors, yet himself remains the same undivided God.

CANTO XXX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The augmented beauty of Beatrice overpowers Dante, who in her company is caught up to the Empyrean, and after having for a time been dazzled, has his sight strengthened by her aid, and by virtue of a river of light which spreads out into a circular expanse. He sees the white-robed company of the blessed surrounding it, rank above rank, in the form of an immense amphitheatre. The emperor Henry VII. and Pope Clement V.

About six thousand miles from hence away
Noon burns, here almost level with the ground
Now bends earth's shadow, as night ends her sway,[1]
While in mid heaven, to us a vast profound,

[1] The circumference of the Earth being about 23,000 miles, Dante represents a fourth part of it (5,750) "about 6,000 miles," as the distance eastward of those places where the Sun is on the meridian when the day dawns in Italy. The shadow of the earth forms a vast cone, always on the side opposite to that on which the Sun is shining, and which reaches beyond the Moon's orbit, as we see in a lunar eclipse. Dante indicates the dawn by describing this shadowy cone in the West, as almost sunk to a level with the ground in Italy, its upper side forming nearly a tangent with the earth's circumference there. Milton indicates the evening by describing the same shadow rising in the East:

"Now had Night measured with her shadowy cone
Half way uphill, this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the Cherubim,
Forth issuing at the accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
To their night-watch."—*Paradise Lost*, iv. 776, &c.

The stars begin to pale, and one by one
Are lost to sight within this lower bound.
And as the brightest handmaid of the Sun[1]
Proceeds, heaven more and more doth on them close,
Till even the last and fairest star is gone.[2]
So that triumphant choir which blithely goes[3]
Always around the point that vanquish'd me,[4]
Seeming enclosed by what it doth enclose,[5]
Fade by degrees till them no more I see:
Wherefore mine eyes now turn'd to Beatrice,
No view besides and love impelling me.
If all that hath been said of her, I wis,
Could in a single strain of praise be blended,
'Twere feeble to describe a turn like this.[6]
The beauty which I saw so much transcended
Our human sense, that I believe its sum
Is only by its Maker comprehended.[7]

[1] Aurora—the Morning.

[2] Lucifer—that is, Venus, when seen as the Morning Star—is the last to disappear. We have several times watched this planet for half an hour after sun-rise; and, with a steadier gaze, might have watched it much longer.

[3] The vanishing of the vision, through the increase and excess of celestial glory, is compared to the fading away of the stars at dawn.

[4] See Canto xxviii. 16, &c.

[5] They encircle the point, but its lustre visibly extends around and far beyond them.

[6] *Questa vice:* thus, *Genesis* ii. 23; when Eve was brought to Adam, he exclaimed, "This turn, &c. *Hac vice!*" &c.

[7] Beatrice now appeared to Dante more beautiful than ever, so that her smile fairly overcame him and surpassed description, which he ceases to attempt.

Allegorically, Divine Wisdom is personified, its beauty being

But at this pass I own myself o'ercome,
As ne'er some knotty point his theme that cross'd,
Forced comic bard or tragic to succumb:[1]
For as the Sun to sight that blenches most,
So beams the memory of that sweet smile,
That all coherent thoughts in me are lost.
From the first day I saw her face erewhile
On earth, until the view I now obtain,
To follow her ne'er yet has fail'd my style:
But now no more can my poetic strain
Attendant on her beauty persevere;
As artists with their best content remain.
Now to a blazon loftier and more clear
Than of my trumpet, her I leave, secure[2]
That of my arduous task the end is near.
With voice and gesture of a guide mature,
"The largest corporal orb we've left and move,"
She said, "within the heaven of light most pure.
Light intellectual and full of love;
Love of true joy and full felicity,
Joy which all sweetness else is far above.
Here thou each host of Paradise wilt see;
And one the same appearance will present
In which at Doomsday they'll be seen by thee."[3]

fully known only to the Infinite Mind. Man's wisdom is always capable of increase; one discovery leads to another; and of human science there is no ultimatum. But the Wisdom of God is perfect.

[1] For Dante's notion of Comedy and Tragedy, see Essay prefixed to *Inferno*, "On the title of this Translation."

[2] "Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine."
Childe Harold, iii. 29.

[3] *Heb.* xii. 22, 23. The *angels* will then undergo no change.

Like sudden lightning-flash, by which are shent
The visual spirits, so that it deprives
The sight of objects the most prominent;
Thus round me shone a light that seem'd alive,
And left me cover'd with a veil so bright,
No view of aught beyond could I derive.
"The love that gives this tranquil heaven delight,
With welcome sweet receives therein well pleased,
The torch adapting to the kindled light."[1]
No sooner had the words thus briefly phrased
Enter'd within me, than I understood
That I above my former might was raised,
And with new power of vision was endued;
So that no light could be so pure and glowing
That without screen my eyes had not withstood.
And light I saw like to a river flowing;[2]
Ruddy with lightnings, 'twixt two banks it roll'd,
Deck'd by the spring whose wondrous flowers were blowing.
From the stream issued sparkles manifold,
Which midst the flowers on each side radiate,
Like rubies in a setting form'd of gold.[3]
With odours then as if inebriate,
They sunk again into the wondrous gurge,
And as they enter'd others issued straight.
"The high desires which now inflame and urge
To know what thou dost see, please me the more
The more they make thy bosom swell and surge:
But of this water thou must drink, before

[1] Adapting the faculties to the light imparted.

[2] *Rev.* xxii. 1.

[3] The sparkles (called "topazes," line 76) are angels; the flowers which adorn the banks are the spirits of the blessed.

In thee can be allay'd such thirst intense."
So spake mine eyes' fair sun; and furthermore
Added, "The stream and topazes which thence
Emerge re-ëntering, and the smiling flowers,
Are shadowy prefaces of their true sense.[1]
Not that these things yet lack the ripening hours;
But, that thy sight to objects so sublime
Soars not, is through thy own defective powers."
Not swifter does the infant in life's prime
Rush to the swelling breast, if its awaking
Has been delay'd beyond its usual time,[2]
Than to the stream I turn'd, in hope of making
Mine eyes more perfect mirrors, and stoop'd there
To quaff the wave, thence new perception taking.
And as the fringes of mine eyelids were
Drinking thereof, the river seem'd to me
From lengthen'd shape to have grown circular.[3]
Then, like those persons whom in masks we see,
Who, if their borrow'd show be laid aside,
Quite other than at first will seem to be;
Even so that festal joy was amplified;
The flowers and sparkles glow'd with brighter sheen,
So that both courts of heaven I now descried.
Splendour of God! thou by whose light I've seen
The lofty triumph of the kingdom true,
Give me the virtue to describe that scene.
There is in heaven a light which brings to view
Him who creates to that created one

[1] "A shadow of good things to come."—*Heb.* x. 1.
[2] "——— The piping cry of lips that brook
No pain and small suspense."—*Childe Harold*, iv. 149.
[3] The river seemed to have spread out into a circular lake.

Who doth in Him alone his peace pursue.
In circular figure spread, that light hath won
Such vast extent, that its circumference
Would be too large a cincture for the Sun.
Its aspect whole illumes with rays intense
The summit of the Primum Mobilè,
Which takes therefrom its life and influence.
And as a cliff whose base is in the sea,
Looks down to see herself reflected there,
In flowers and verdure deck'd resplendently;
So ranged above around that mirror fair,
More than a thousand thrones mine eye perceives[1]
Gazing, all who from earth on high repair.[2]
And if the lowest rank so much receives
Of radiant joy, what amplitude of light
Must crown this Rose's most exalted leaves?
My vision was not dazzled by its height,
Nor by its ample breadth, but took in all
The nature and extent of that delight.
There near and far imply no rise or fall;
For where immediately the Power Supernal
Governs, nought signify laws natural.
To th' yellow of that Rose[3] which sempiternal,
In rows dilated, makes its praise aspire
In fragrance to the Sun of Spring eternal,

[1] An immense amphitheatre around the ocean of light, rising tier above tier as it receded, and thronged with glorified beings.

[2] "And I saw as it were a sea of glass, &c."—*Rev.* xv. 2.

[3] Dante having figuratively spoken of the celestial amphitheatre as a Rose, of which the circular gradations are the leaves, here speaks of the Divine light in its centre, and those who share it, as the yellow filaments, which add to its grace and loveliness.

Like one yet mute who may to speak desire,
Me Beatrice drew on, and said, "Behold,
How great the concourse of the white-robed quire!
Our city, see what ample bounds enfold!
So fill'd our benches are already shown,
Few more we need with us to be enroll'd.
In that great seat o'er which is placed a crown,
Already by thine eager looks discuss'd,
Ere at this marriage supper thou sit down,
Will rest the soul by mortals call'd Augúst,
Great Henry[1] who, Italia's rights to enforce,
Will come ere him she is disposed to trust.
The blind cupidity which is your curse
Has made you like a babe dissatisfied,
Who dies of want, yet drives away his nurse.
And one will in the Church's court preside
Who will, by force and treachery matured,
Not walk in the same pathway by his side.[2]
But not long will he be by Heaven endured
In that high office, but be thrust withal
Where Simon Magus hath a home secured,
And make him of Alagna lower fall."[3]

[1] The emperor Henry VII. who died in 1313. Villani says of him, "He was a man wise, just, and gracious, brave and fearless in arms; a man of honour and a good Catholic; of a magnanimous heart, much feared and held in awe; and if he had lived longer, would have done the greatest things."—lib. ix. cap. 1.

[2] The Emperor's purpose, to tranquilise and unite Italy, was defeated by the secret hostility and machinations of Pope Clement V., who stirred up the Guelphs to rebel against him.

[3] Pope Clement V. was to take the place of Boniface VIII. in Hell. See *Inferno*, xix. 1, 53; *Purgatorio*, xx. 86; *Paradiso*, xvii. 82; xxvii, 19, and the notes respectively.

CANTO XXXI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Church triumphant, human and angelic, in continuation of the glorious vision described in the last Canto. Dante perceives that Beatrice has left him. St. Bernard converses with him, and shows him Beatrice on her celestial throne. His parting address to her. The glory and blessedness of the Virgin Mary.

THUS marshal'd in the form of a white Rose,
The saintly armament was shown to me,
The Spouse of Christ, which to his blood she owes.[1]
That other host which kens while flying free,
Who sing the glory of the God they love,
And his good will which made them such to be,[2]
Like trooping bees that from the hive now rove[3]
And plunge in flowers, then soar and homeward wend
To where their labours into sweets improve,
Into that vast and brilliant flower descend
Which had so many leaves, then to the abode
Where ever dwells their love they reascend.
With living lustre all their faces glow'd,
Of gold their wings, and such their hue beside,
The driven snow such whiteness never show'd.

[1] *Acts* xx. 28. [2] The angelic host.
[3] A similar comparison is employed by HOMER, *Iliad*, ii. 87; by VIRGIL, *Æneid*, i. 430; and by MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, i. 768.

When in the flower they rank on rank subside,
The peace and love they proffer with delight
Which they had gain'd while they their pinions plied.
Nor did the passing 'twixt the flower and height
Of such a multitude that flying went,
Impede the view, or aught obscure the light.
For through all space, as each is excellent,
The light Divine will all things penetrate,
Nor can aught e'er an obstacle present.
In this most glorious and secure estate
Now peopled by the old race and the new,[1]
Vision and love all on one object wait.
O Trinal Light, which in one Star they view,[2]
Whose corruscation such content supplies,
Behold the tempest which on earth we rue.[3]
If the Barbarians from the clime which lies
Beneath where every day shines Helicè
Wheeling with her dear son around their skies,[4]
When Rome and her immortal works they see,

[1] By the old race angels are meant, and by the new race redeemed and glorified mortals.

[2] The Triune God. See Canto xxviii. 16.

[3] The troubles and calamities of life in general, and the lamentable condition of Italy in particular.

[4] Helicè (from a district so named in Achaia, where she dwelt) is the same as Callisto; of whom see *Purgatorio* xxv. 132, and note. Her son was Arcas, also called Parrhasis.

"*Parrhasis obliquos Helice cum verteret axes.*"

"When Helice turns round the oblique axles of Parrhasis."

LUCAN, *Phars.* ii. 237.

Arcas, the son of Jupiter and Callisto, reigned in Pelasgia, which from him was called Arcadia, and taught his subjects to till the ground and spin wool. Poetically, *Ursa Minor*, the Lesser Bear.

Were struck with wonder—since the Lateran[1]
Surpass'd all mortal things in majesty;
I who had risen to things divine from Man,
And to the eternal had arrived from time,
From Florence too, the just and wise to scan,
With what amazement must such scene sublime
And my great joy thereat have fill'd my mind!
Certes, my thoughts unbreathed with silence chime.
And as a pilgrim his content will find,
Looking around the temple of his vow,
And hopes one day to tell what's there enshrined,
So through the living light that bathed my brow,
Mine eyes glanced o'er the seats in each degree,
Now up, now down, and sweeping round them now.
Persuasive looks I saw, to charity,
Adorn'd with heavenly light and their own smile,

[1] The barbarous nations of the north, the Goths under Alaric, the Huns under Attila, and the Vandals under Genseric, who successively threatened, or besieged and plundered Rome, in the fourth and fifth centuries, were awed by the very name of Rome, and struck with astonishment at the splendour of the city and the magnificence of her public buildings and monuments.

The Lateran was the palace of the Popes, from the time of Constantine to the return of the Papal Court from Avignon in 1377, when Gregory XI. transferred the Papal residence to the Vatican. The old Lateran palace was destroyed by fire in the time of Clement V, and after lying in ruins 270 years, was rebuilt by Sixtus V. In 1693, under Innocent XII. it became a public hospital, and by Gregory XVI., in 1843, as the best means of preserving the building, it was converted into a museum.—MURRAY'S *Hand-book of Central Italy and Rome.* Lateranus Plautus, who was Consul, A.D. 65, had a palace on the site, whence its name. He was put to death by Nero.

And gestures full of grace and dignity.
The general plan of Paradise, meanwhile,
My view already fully comprehended,
But fix'd on no part yet, so volatile.
And with new longing that my doubts were ended,
Of certain things I turn'd to ask my guide,
On which my judgment had remain'd suspended.
Another than the one I sought replied:
I look'd for Beatrice, but in her stead
Saw an old man robed like the glorified.
Over his eyes and in his aspect spread,
Kindness and joy, by pious action shown,
As of a tender father, might be read.
And "Where is she?" I ask'd with eager tone.
Then he; "Thy wishes fully to expound,
By Beatrice moved, I from my place have flown.[1]
If thou wilt upward look to the third round
Of the chief grade, her form thou wilt descry
Upon the throne which her desert has found."
Raising mine eyes above, without reply,
Her, circled with a crown, I saw with wonder,
Reflecting the eternal beams on high.
From the most lofty sphere whence rolls the thunder,
A mortal eye were not so distant, sure,
If in the ocean's lowest depth placed under,
As mine from Beatrice; yet there to view her
It hinder'd not: her image visible
To me descended through that medium pure.
"O lady, who my hope hast prosper'd well,
And didst for my salvation enterprise

[1] Beatrice, or Divine Wisdom, sends Bernard, the greatest divine of the middle ages, to complete the instruction of Dante.

To leave the traces of thy feet in Hell,[1]
By all the things on which I've set mine eyes,
Both of thy power and generosity
The virtue and the grace I recognise:
Thou, of a slave, hast set me fully free.[2]
By all the ways and all the modes most fit,[3]
Which for that purpose were employ'd by thee,
Me let not thy munificence e'er quit,
So that my soul, which health from thee did gain,
Pleasing to thee may from the body flit."
Such was my prayer, and she, as it was plain,
Though so far distant, smiled, and look'd on me,
Then to the Eternal Fountain turn'd again.
And that old Saint said then, "To wait on thee
By prayer and holy love enjoin'd am I,
That thou thy way mayst finish perfectly:
Now let thine eyes around this garden fly;
Because the sight thy faculties will raise
To mount where shines the ray divine on high.
And she, the Queen of Heaven, for whom I blaze
With love entire, will grant us every aid,
For me, her faithful Bernard still she sways."[4]

[1] *Inferno*, ii. 52—126. [2] *Rom.* vi, 17—22.
[3] *Purgatorio*, xxx. 136—141.
[4] St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux. See Canto xv. 142, note. He died in 1153, in his 63 year. In 1140, certain churches in France adopted a new festival in honour of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, which no sooner came to the knowledge of Bernard, than he severely censured the Canons of Lyons, and opposed the doctrine with the greatest vigour, as it ascribed to her what belonged to Christ alone. Thus commenced a controversy which was not decided till the present Pope added this dogma as a new article to the Creed.

Like one, perhaps, who from Croatia[1] stray'd,
Our Veronica[2] hither comes to see,
Whose ancient fame, long as it is display'd
Makes him insatiate, so that inwardly
He says, "My Lord, Christ Jesus, the true God,
Was this your form and aspect really?"
So gazed I wondering, as before me stood
That living Charity which here below
His taste of peace to contemplation owed.
"O Son of Grace, thou canst not fully know,"
Thus he began, "our joy so worthy note,
Holding thine eyes, as thou dost now, too low:
But view the circles to the most remote,
Far as to where thou seëst sit the Queen
To whom this realm is subject and devote."
I raised mine eyes, and as the eastern sheen
Of morning over the horizon wide,
Surpasses that which in the west is seen,
Thus, as from valley up the mountain side[3]

[1] A mountainous region N.E. of the Adriatic, bounded by Dalmatia and Bosnia on the south, Sclavonia and Hungary on the east, Styria and Illyria on the north, and Istria and the sea on the west. The greater part belongs to Austria, and the rest to Turkey.

[2] The supposed impression of our Saviour's face, exhibited at Rome on Holy Thursday, for the adoration of the faithful, the Pope himself setting the example. See *Inferno*, xxi. 48, and note. Dante, in his *Vita Nuova* alludes to this custom.

The "vernicle" mentioned by Chaucer and Piers Ploughman (See the quotation, Canto xxv. 18, note), is a diminutive, which refers to such copies of the Veronica as pilgrims returning from Rome were in the habit of bringing with them.

"A vernicle had he sewed upon his cappe."

Prologue to *Canterbury Tales*.

[3] The summit or edge of the Rose, the highest range.

Mine eye ascended, I beheld afar
One point outshining all the front beside.
And as that region which awaits the car
By Phaëton ill-guided,[1] shines more bright,
And on all sides the skies less brilliant are;
So blazed that peaceful Oriflamme[2] to sight
Intensely in the midst, and every part
In equal measure show'd a paler light.
A thousand angels with their wings apart,
Around the Light which to that midst belongs,
Each one distinct in splendour and in art,
I saw upon their sports and festal songs
A beauty smile which gladden'd every saint,
Whose eyes beam'd joy on all the other throngs.
Had I, in speaking, wealth without restraint,
And equal to my thoughts, I should not dare
Attempt the least of these delights to paint.
When Bernard saw how fix'd intently were
Mine eyes on her who raised his ardent flame,
He turn'd his glance with such affection there,
That my own gaze more ardent still became.

[1] See *Inferno*, xvii. 106—108; *Purgatorio* iv. 72, and notes.

[2] The famous standard of the ancient kings of France, carried by them to their wars. It was a piece of red or flame-coloured taffeta, cut into three points, each with a tassel of green silk, which was fixed on the top of a golden spear; and hence its name. It was originally the ensign of the abbey of St. Denis, and borne by the Counts of Vexin, who held their earldom as a fief of this abbey, with the obligation of leading its vassals to war, and defending its lands—under the title of *Advocate*. When the earldom became united to the crown, the Oriflamme or standard of St. Denis, became its principal ensign.

CANTO XXXII.

THE ARGUMENT.

St. Bernard explains to Dante the two divisions of the Rose which confront each other, consisting of Old and New Testament Saints. He points out Adam, Eve, Rachel, John the Baptist, the Virgin Mary, Peter, John the Evangelist, Moses, St. Anne, Lucia, the Angel Gabriel, and the children of the faithful under every dispensation. He solves a doubt which the poet had entertained respecting them.

RAPT in delight, that meditative man[1]
Now as a liberal teacher interposed,
And in these holy words his speech began:
"The wound which Mary mollified and closed,

[1] St. Bernard. The valley where, in 1115, he established his monastery, had previously been a desert, and a notorious haunt of brigands. If was then called *Vallis Absinthialis* (Wormwood Vale), but when it had been cleared by the labours of Bernard and his associates, the country people called it Clairvaux (*Clara vallis*) the clear, light, or illustrious valley. The sanctity and persuasive powers of Bernard gave him a loftier authority than the triple crown could have bestowed. His decisions were generally received as oracles. He settled the dispute between two rival popes, and by his influence with Lewis VI. of France and Henry I. of England, he set aside the claims of Anacletus, and secured the chair for Innocent II.

She who, so beautiful, sits at her feet,[1]
That wound at first inflicted and exposed.
And under her sits Rachel[2] in a seat
Of those whose order forms the third degree,
With Beatrice; as in thy view complete.
Sarah, Rebecca, Judith too, and she
The Singer's grandmother,[3] who in his grief
Said, for his fault, 'Have mercy, Lord, on me.'[4]
Thus, as from rank to rank I name the chief
Downward from thence, to see them thou hast power,
Down through the Rose proceeding leaf by leaf.
And as to the seventh grade, so from it lower,
Of Hebrew ladies the succession here is,
Dividing all the tresses of the flower:
For as their faith in Christ its aspect varies,
Their station is; these are the wall where meet
The separate sections of the hallow'd series.[5]
On this side, where the flower is quite complete
In all its leaves, they have their seat received,
Whose faith a future Christ went forth to greet:
And on that side establish'd are perceived,
With vacancies through their half circles wide,[6]
Those who in Christ already come believed.
And as the glorious seat, and those descried

[1] Eve.

[2] See *Inferno* ii. 102; *Purgatorio* xxvii. 105—8, note.

[3] Ruth.

[4] David; *Psalm* l. (Vulg. *Miserere mei.*—*Ps.* li, Eng. version).

[5] The Rose is divided by a file of Hebrew dames into two compartments, consisting of the faithful who lived before, and those who lived after the coming of Christ.

[6] Many of the seats were yet vacant. "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room."—*Luke* xiv. 22.

Below it, of the bright celestial Dame,[1]
Serves as an intermedium to divide,
Such, on the other hand, great John[2] became,
Who saintly still, the waste and martyrdom
Endured, and for two years to Limbo came.[3]
And, so dividing, under him succumb
Francis, Augustine, Bennet,[4] and the rest,
From round to round, till to the base you come.
Now be the high Providence divine confest,
Which from the Faith in both its aspects shown,
Impartially will fill this garden blest.
And know that from that lower step far down
The midway tract that parts the two divisions,
None sit through any merit of their own,
But through another,[5] and on fix'd conditions:
Because all these are souls that were set free
Before they could command their own volitions.[6]
This by their faces thou canst plainly see,
And also by their voices' childish sound,
If thou but look and listen heedfully.
Now art thou still in doubt, and silent found:

[1] The Virgin Mary. [2] The Baptist.

[3] See *Inferno* iv. 45, 54, and notes.

[4] Previously mentioned, x. 120, xi. 50; xxii. 40.

[5] "The pronoun *altrui* (another) refers to Jesus Christ, whose infinite merits avail for the salvation of those who died before the age of responsibility."—BIAGIOLI. Dante makes their salvation depend on certain "fixed conditions;" namely, the faith of their parents before the law, circumcision under the law, and baptism after the Saviour's coming. We regard the salvation of *all* who die in infancy as unconditional. See *Inferno*, iv. 35, note.

[6] The seats all round the lower half of the Rose are occupied by children. *Matt.* xviii. 10; *Mark* x. 14.

But I the stubborn ligament will burst
In which thy subtile reasonings hold thee bound.
Within the circuit of this empire, first,
Know that there can exist no casual thing,
More than can sadness, hunger, pain, or thirst.
From law eternal permanence doth spring
To all thou seest, which suits us perfectly,
As to the finger corresponds the ring.[1]
And hence this race who came so speedily
To the true life, not without cause here share
Perfection more or less in its degree.
The King by whom this realm is free from care,
And hath of joy and love such vast supplies,
That no one's wishes can beyond them *dare*,
To all souls, as seems good in his pure eyes,
Creating, he doth different gifts afford
From his blest presence: let the fact suffice.
And this is noticed in the Sacred Word
Most clearly, when the twins are mention'd there,
Whose anger in their mother's womb was stirr'd.[2]
Wherefore as is the colour of the hair
Which grace on them bestow'd, even so 'tis fit
The chaplet from the Light Supreme they wear.
Then, without aid of their own work or wit,

[1] "By this proverbial phrase is expressed the perfect adaptation of the containing and the contained, the place and condition to their subjects."—BIAGIOLI.

[2] *Gen.* xxv. 22, 23; *Hosea* xii. 3; *Mal.* i. 2, 3; *Rom.* ix. 11, 12. One *nation* was elected, irrespective of merit, to the possession of certain privileges, which were withheld from the other. The passages do not refer to the final and eternal states of any individuals whatever.

They thus are placed in different steps and stages,
And differ but in that first requisite.[1]
It was enough, if in the earliest ages
To save the innocent, for them 'twas will'd
Their parents' faith should gain these heritages.
And when those earliest ages were fulfill'd,
That innocence its strength of wing might gain,
Their males to circumcision they must yield.
But since the time of grace came, none attain
This joy without the baptism into Christ,
But held below must innocence remain.
Now look thou on the face which that of Christ
Resembles most, for in her aspect bright[2]
Alone shalt thou find strength to gaze on Christ."
Then on her saw I shower'd such great delight
Ecstatic, which those holy beings bore
Created to fly through that ample height;
That whatsoever I had seen before,
So much of wonderful ne'er puzzled me,
Nor, to my view, of God such likeness wore.
That angel who descended formerly,
And sweetly sung, "Hail Mary, full of grace!"[3]
His wings outspread before her piously.
The blessed Court, from every several place,
An answer made to that sweet song divine,

[1] God bestows on some greater natural, civil, and spiritual, advantages than on others. This, as a matter of fact, is undeniable, and is no more inconsistent with wisdom and justice than that some of his creatures were made angels and others men.

[2] The face of the Virgin Mary.

[3] "*Ave, gratia plena.*"—Vulgate. "Hail, thou that art highly favoured."—English version; *Luke*, i. 28.

So that still more serene became each face.
"O reverend Sire, who didst thyself resign
To come thus low for me, from those pure beams
Wherein thou sitt'st, by lot eternal thine;
Who is that angel, whose blithe look that gleams
With joy on our Queen's eyes is fix'd, so far
Therewith enamour'd that on fire he seems?"
Thus to the teaching of my Tutelar[1]
Again I turn'd me; beautified was he
By her, as by the Sun the morning star.
"Boldness and beauty," then said he to me,
"As much as ever soul or angel show'd,
Are all in him, as we would have it be.
For he to Mary, from this high abode [rout,
Brought down the palm-branch,[2] when our foes to
The Son of God vouchsafed to bear our load.
But come now, as I walk look thou about,
And mark while of this empire I disclose
The great patricians, righteous and devout.
Those two who sit above in blest repose,
Through being nearest to our Dame augùst,[3]
Are, as it were, the roots of this vast rose.
He who doth on her left himself adjust,
Is that great father from whose daring taste
The human race endure such bitter gust.[4]
And on the right see that old father graced

[1] St. Bernard.

[2] Painters generally represent the angel Gabriel when on this mission, as bearing a palm-branch in his hand, the emblem of prosperity and victory. See *John* xii. 13, *Rev.* vii. 9.

[3] "Augusta," a name synonymous with Empress.

[4] Adam.

Of Holy Church, in whose hands long agone,
The keys of this fair flower by Christ were placed.[1]
And he who, ere he died—the Apostle John—
The grievous times of that fair Spouse foresaw,[2]
Who by the nails and biting spear was won.
And near him sits the Giver of the Law,
That leader under whom was fed with manna
The ungrateful nation, fickle, headstrong, raw.
To Peter opposite see seated Anna,[3]

[1] "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."—*Matt.* xvi. 19. St. Augustine, Origen, Tertullian, Ambrose, and Hilary say, that the power of the keys thus given to Peter, was given to all the Apostles. Hence Christ says to his disciples, "Whatsoever YE shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," &c.—See *Matt.* xviii. i. 18.

[2] "O, for that warning voice, which he who saw
The Apocalypse heard cry in heaven aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men;
'Woe to the inhabitants on earth!'"—*Par. Lost*, iv. 1.

Irenæus, quoted by Eusebius, when speaking of Antichrist says, "If it were necessary to proclaim his name openly at the present time, it would have been declared by him *who saw the Apocalypse;* for it is not long since it was seen, but almost in our own generation, at the close of Domitian's reign."—*Eccles. Hist.* Bk. iii. ch. 18.

[3] The only person mentioned in the New Testament by this name, *Luke*, ii. 36, was not among our Lord's ancestry. "Mary was properly the daughter of Eli; and Joseph is reckoned after him, not as his son, but as his *son-in-law*, instead of his wife Mary, according to the custom of the Jews, not to reckon the woman *by name* in the pedigree, but to reckon the *husband* in right of his *wife*. Tradition reports her to have been the daughter of *Joachim* and *Anna*, but Eli and Joachim are in effect one name, Eli being a diminutive of Eliakim, and Eliakim the same with

To look upon her daughter so intent,
That with her eye unmoved she chants 'Hosanna.'
And opposite the world's first father leant,
Sits Lucia, at whose prayer thy Lady sped[1]
What time thine eyelids were to ruin bent.
But since thy slumber will so soon have fled,
Here we give o'er, as a good tailor tries
To shape the garment as the cloth may spread.[2]
Now to the First Love let our vision rise,
That thou into his light mayst gaze thy fill,
Far as 'tis possible to mortal eyes.
But lest thou backward sink, although thou still
Might'st move thy wings believing that thou soarest,
'Tis meet thou supplicate for grace, then will
She aid thee who hath grace to help the poorest.
And let thy warm affection follow me,
While I express what thou in heart implorest."
This holy orison then offer'd he.

Jekoiakim or Joachim. Compare 2 *Kings* xxiii, 34 and 2 *Chron.* xxxvi., 4." SOUTH, vol. iii, *Sermon* 3. The tradition, however, *may* have had no better foundation than the forged Gospels which assert it, and which were circulated in the third and fourth centuries among the Gnostics and other heretical sects.—See *Purgatorio*, v. 100, and note: also the "*Gospel of the Birth of Mary*" and the "*Protevangelion*," in HONE's "*Apocryphal New Testament*."

[1] See *Inferno*, ii. 53, note, 100; *Purgatorio*, ix. 55.

[2] Here we learn that the sartorial proverb, "To cut the garment according to the cloth," was extant in Dante's time.

CANTO XXXIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

A hymn to the Virgin Mary by St. Bernard. Beatrice and the Eternal Splendour. Dante looks up, and sees a symbolical representation of the Trinity in Unity. Conclusion of the Trilogy.

"O VIRGIN mother, daughter of thy Son,[1]
The humblest and yet most exalted creature,
Term by the Eternal Counsel fixed upon,
Thou hast ennobled so our human nature,
Its Maker, who disdained not to be made,
Took from thy mould its form and every feature.
Love was in thee rekindled when decay'd,
Through whose blest ardour in eternal peace,
This flower hath sprouted and its bloom displayed.
Thou art our noon-day torch, who dost increase
The charity of heaven; with men on earth,
The living spring of hopes that never cease.
Lady, thou art so great, and of such worth,
Who that seeks grace does not to thee repair,
Would have desire fly wingless from its birth.[2]

[1] Chaucer, in the "Seconde Nonnes Tale," alludes to St. Bernard's praise of the Virgin Mary, and has an address to her, which is in substance a translation of this passage.

[2] "Lo, his desire woll flie withouten winges."—CHAUCER, *Troilus and Cresside*, iii.

Such is thy bounty that not only where
'Tis ask'd thy succour comes, but frequently
With liberal hand anticipates the prayer.
In thee is mercy, pity is in thee,
Munificence is thine, in thee are found
All that of goodness can in creatures be.
One who has seen, from the abyss profound
Of the whole universe up to this height,
The lives of all the spirits round by round,[1]
Here supplicates thee for such strength of sight
That he the upward gaze may now maintain,
And to that final blessedness take flight.
And I, who never long'd that view to gain
More for myself than him, to thee have bow'd
With prayers, and beg they may not be in vain;[2]
That thou wouldst dissipate each lingering cloud
From his mortality, so that the view
Of sovereignty may be to him allow'd.
Again I pray thee, Queen,—for thou canst do
Whate'er thou wilt—that thou preserve him whole
After such sight, and his affections true.
Let thy protection his desires control:
See Beatrice, to aid my prayers to thee,
Raise her clasp'd hands, with many a blessed soul."[3]
The eyes which God himself delights to see,
Fix'd on the suitor, that his pious prayer

[1] From Hell, through Purgatory, to Paradise.

[2] *Scarsi*, inefficacious.

[3] This address to the Virgin Mary, whether considered as that of Dante or St. Bernard, is only to be excused by the deepened shade which in the Middle Ages had come down on the Church. —See *Purgatorio*, v. 101; *Paradiso*, xxiii. 128, and notes.

Had won her favour, showed conclusively;
Then turn'd to the Eternal Light they were,
In which created gaze, if there extended,
Could never penetrate, however clear.
And I, who to the final goal now tended
Of all my wishes, as might fitly be,
Felt that my ardour of desire was ended.
Then with a smile St. Bernard beckon'd me
To look above; but what he wish'd be sure,
I had meanwhile commenced spontaneously:
For this my sight refined could now endure,
And more and more it pierced the living ray
Of that high light original and pure.
Henceforth too vast for speech was my survey,
At such a sight my efforts I give o'er,
And memory with so great a strain gives way.
As he who sleeping hath some scene before
His eyes, and when the dream is past retains
The impression, but the rest returns no more;
So 'tis with me; for though the vision wanes,
The sweet born from it, when 'tis nearly gone,
Distilling yet within my heart remains.
So melts away the snow before the sun;
Thus when the wind had made the light leaves fly,
The Sibyl's oracles were all undone.
O Light Supreme! which art upraised so high
Above our mortal thought, now to my mind
Restore a little of what met mine eye:
And give my tongue such powerful words to find,
That one spark only of thy gracious light
To future ages it may leave behind.
For if my memory can recall aright

Somewhat, and sound a little in my lay,
More will be known of thy victorious might.
I deem the brightness of that living ray
Had quench'd my vision with its beam intense,
If I therefrom had turn'd mine eyes away.
And I remember, how to inure my sense
I dared the more, for now my vision found
Its goal in Uncreated Excellence.
O the abundant grace without a bound,
That on the Light Eternal I could gaze,
A sight which all my hopes and wishes crown'd.
In that abyss I saw, with vast amaze,
As in one volume bound by love divine,
All that the universe at large displays:
Substance, and accident, and modes combine,
Together blended in so strange a mould,
That a mere glimpse is this report of mine.[1]
The universal form of this world's fold
So intricate, I think I saw; so far go
My feelings while I speak, with joy untold.
One hour on memory lays more strict embargo
Than five and twenty centuries on the emprise,
Which startled Neptune at the shade of Argo.[2]
Thus wholly was my soul absorb'd, my eyes
Were fix'd immoveably, and so intent,
That evermore to gaze my wishes rise.
Such we become when on that lustre bent,

[1] Substance is what subsists of itself; accident—that is, quality, that which cannot subsist but as the property of another.

[2] The vision had occasioned in a moment greater forgetfulness of what he had seen, than 2500 years had availed to make the Argonautic expedition forgotten.—LOMBARDI.

For other objects 'tis impossible
That we to turn therefrom should e'er consent;
Because the real good that moves the will
All centres there, and there 'tis perfect; man
Finds nothing else that his desires fulfill.
Now must all words of mine fall shorter than
An infant's tongue when at the mother's breast,
Even with respect to what my memory can.
Not that the living flame seen there possess'd
More than a single aspect, as I gaz'd,
Which what it was before will always rest:
But that my power of vision had been raised
Within me, as I look'd at that sole sight,
From change in me to me 'twas newly phased.
In that profound of clear and glorious light
Subsisting, were three lofty circles seen,
Of triple hue, within one circle bright.[1]
And, like two rainbows, one seemed to have been[2]
Reflected from the other, and the third
A flame that waved with equal breath serene.
O how all speech falls short, how weak each word
For my conception! which, to what was shown,
Is such, 'twould seem too little to record.
O Light Eternal! of thyself alone!
Thou by thyself alone art understood,
And smilest loving, to thyself thus known.
That circle which so framed thou dost include,[3]

[1] A symbolic representation of the Trinity in Unity.

[2] "And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald."—*Rev.* iv. 3.

[3] "The second of the circles, 'Light of light,' in which he dimly beheld the mystery of the Incarnation."—CARY.

In thee appearing like reflected flame,
When by mine eyes it had been sometime view'd,
Within itself, in colour quite the same,
Seem'd like our human form depicted there;[1]
Hence wholly fix'd thereon my gaze became.
Like the geometer who tries to square
The circle, but in vain his thought has chased
The principle he seeks, with all his care;
Such was I at the novel sight I traced:
I mused how to the circle had acquired
The image aptness, and how there 'twas placed;
But thereto vainly had my wings aspired,
Had not a flash of lightning from above
To my rapt mind reveal'd what I desired.
Here lacks my lofty fancy power to rove:
But my desire and will, like rushing cars
That roll with equal speed, were moved by love,[2]
Which moves the Sun and all the other stars.[3]

[1] The glorified human nature of Christ. "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it."—*Ezek.* i, 26.

[2] "Or ever I was aware, my soul placed me on the chariots of Amminadib (or "my willing people."—*Margin*).—*Canticles* vi. 12.

[3] Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. AMEN.

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